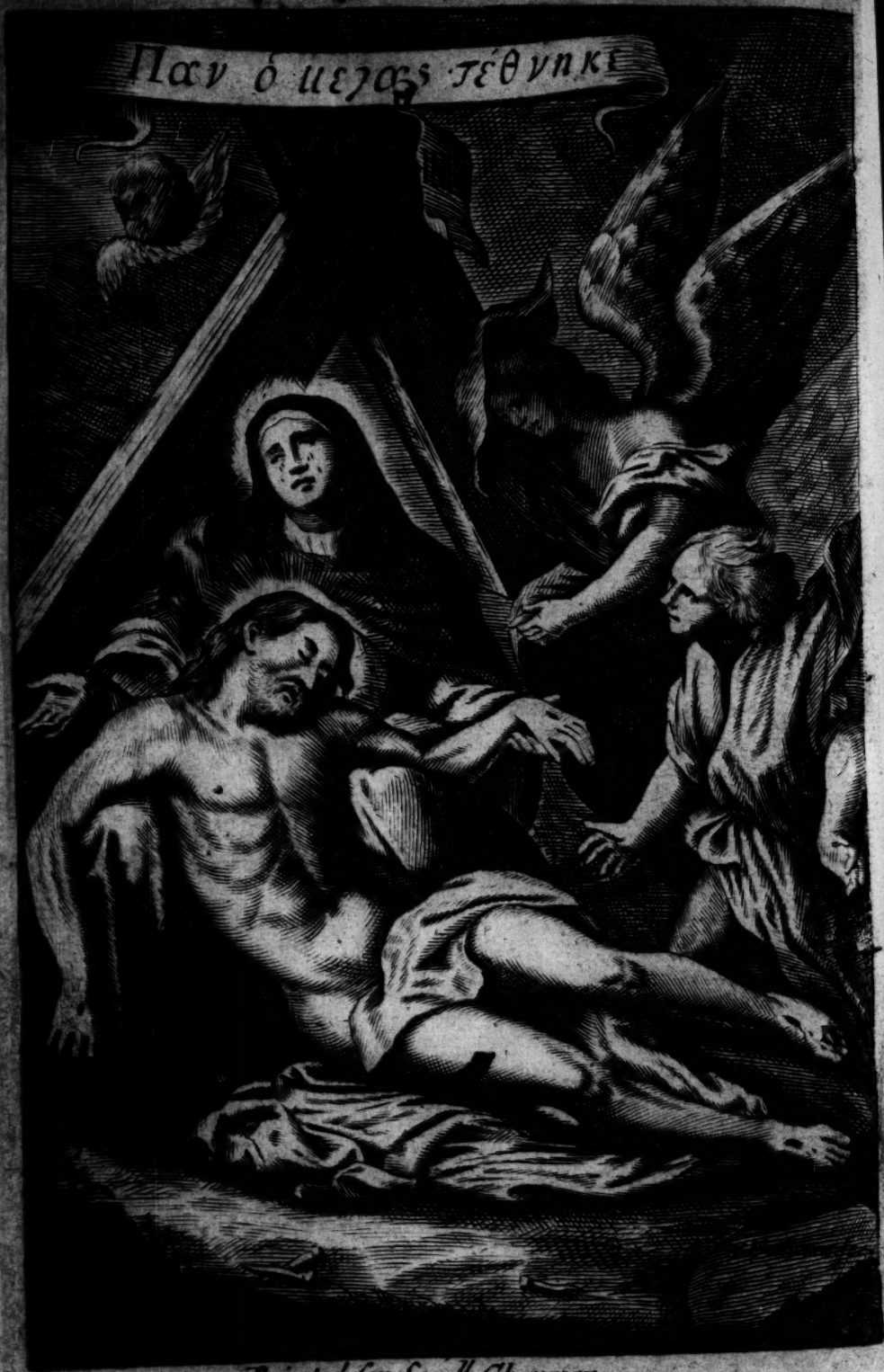
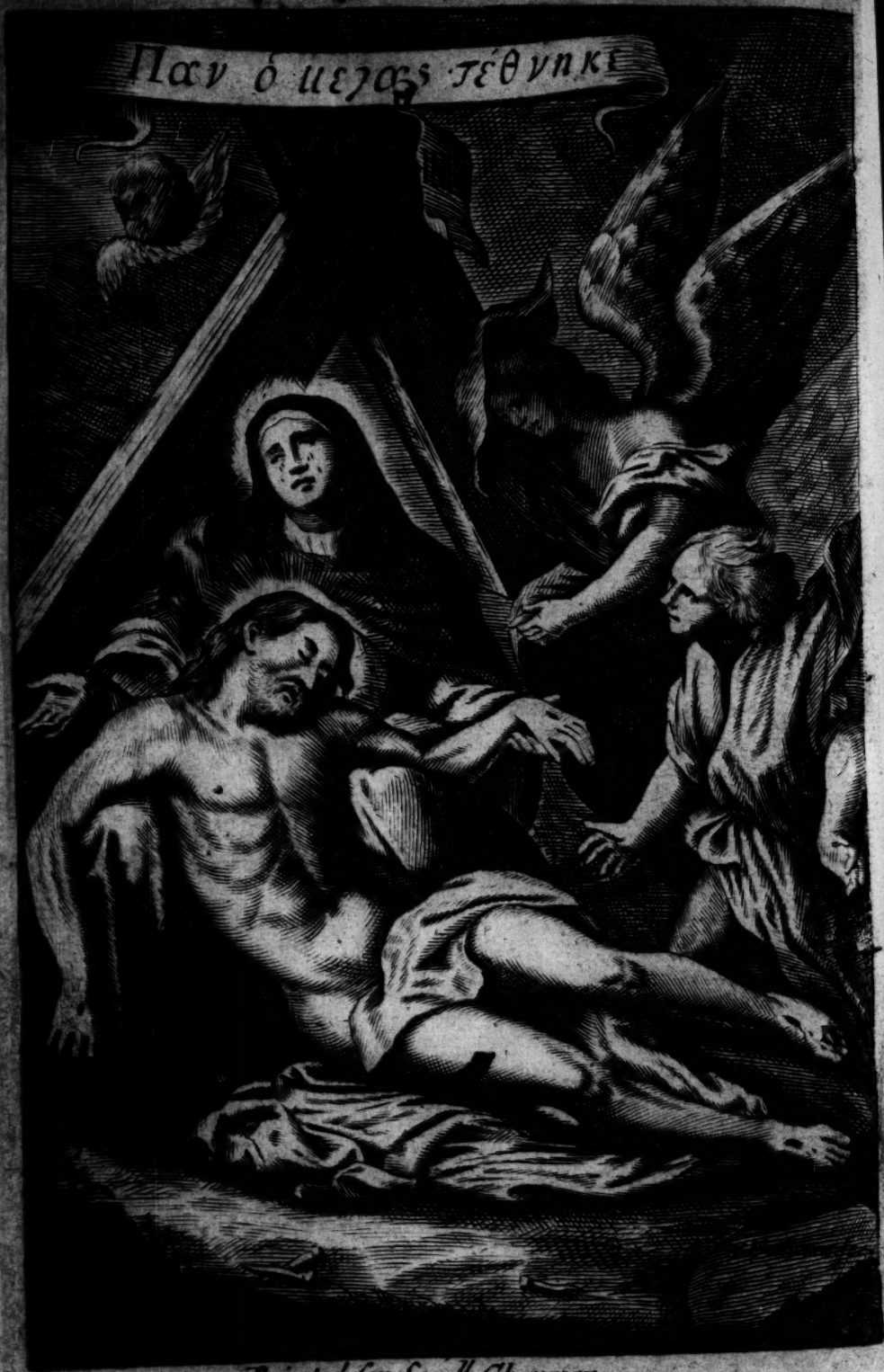




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THE
Crucified Jesus:
Or, A Full
ACCOUNT
OF THE
Nature, End, Design, and Benefits,
OF THE
SACRAMENT
OF THE
LORD'S SUPPER.

With Necessary
DIRECTIONS, PRAYERS,
PRAISES, and MEDITATIONS,
To be us'd by Persons who come to the
HOLY COMMUNION.

By ANTHONY HORNECK, D. D. late
Chaplain in Ordinary to his Majesty, and
Prebendary of *Westminster*.

The Sixth Edition.

LONDON, Printed by H. MEERE, for T. and S.
CHAPMAN in the *Pall-Mall*. 1716.

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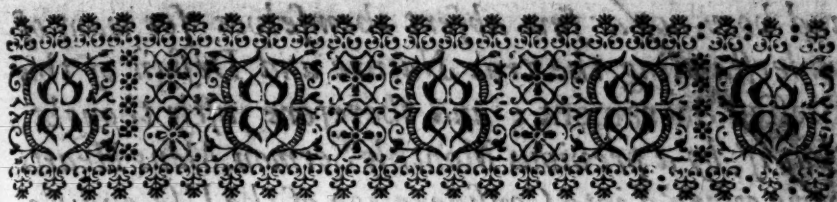
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ΑΓΝΩΣΤΩ ΕΥΕΡΡΕΤΗ.

TO THE

Unknown Benefactor.

SIR,

THE following Discourse being the Substance of several Sermons preached at your Desire and Encouragement, before the Monthly Sacraments, tho' I am ignorant who you are, and what Part of the City or Country you live in, yet I thought it my Duty to let the Publick know, that there is such a Man in the World, who is desirous to do Good, and loves not to be known. This Treatise you have a proper Title to, not only as one whose Heart's Desire is to see the Church of England flourish, but as a Benefactor too; and to have dedicated it to any other Person, had been injurious to your Character.

You were sensible how backward the Generality are to come to the Holy Communion, how much Ground the Church, and Christianity itself, loses by this stupid Negligence of its pretended Voraries,

A

and

The Epistle Dedicatory.

and how not a few absent themselves for want of understanding the true Nature and Design of this Blessed Sacrament ; and therefore justly thought, that if, by a previous Monthly Sermon, Mens Hearts were warn'd into Consideration of the Use and Necessity of this Ordinance, the Mists which hitherto have clouded their Understandings, would be dispell'd, and they become acquainted with their Duty, which was the Cause of your exciting me to this publick Service.

Your Judgment hath not fail'd you ; for since these religious Exercises have been among us, a-bundance of Persons, who before look'd upon their coming to the Holy Table, either as indifferent, or unnecessary, or unseasonable, have, thro' the Blessing of God, bethought themselves, consider'd the Obligations that the mighty Work of Redemption lays upon them, and conscientiously apply'd themselves to the frequent Use of this Universal Medicine. And all I can tell you, for your Encouragement, is this, That as we owe the Beginning and Progress of these Monthly Sermons to your Zeal and Influence, so you will have a Share both in the Good that's done by them, and in the Rewards of those who are thereby brought to a serious Sense of the wonderful Love of God in Christ Jesus. It was a publick Good you design'd by your Munificence ; and that which makes the pious Work the greater, is, that you do not care your left Hand should know what your right Hand doth.

The Almighty hath enrich'd your Heart with the noblest Charity, even with that to the Souls of Men ; an Employment which God himself disdains

The Epistle Dedicatory.

dains not to travel in; and what are all the Angels of Heaven, but ministering Spirits, sent forth to be helpful unto those that shall be Heirs of Salvation?

Nothing is more pleasing to God, than to be instrumental in bringing many Sons unto Glory; and tho' you are no publick Orator, yet you help towards Mens Conversion, and in employing others to rouse them from their spiritual Slumber, your self have a Hand in their Reformation; and, by that Means, preach, tho' you be not in Orders; yet, without Offence to the Law, and at the same Time observe the Canons of the Church, and win Souls, without being engag'd in the sacred Function. Some Criticks think, that St. Paul, in his Address to the Athenians, doth not find Fault with, but commends them for erecting an Altar to the unknown God; and if so, I hope none will blame me for raising this Monument to an unknown Benefactor.

Good Works are the sweetest Incense that can be laid upon God's Altar; and tho' some that have conceal'd their Names, have been discover'd by the charitable Deeds done by them, yet yours are so order'd, that tho' for some Time you have thus generously employ'd part of your Means to advance this publick Good, yet still you are a Stranger to me; and in that, happier than the Roman Senator, who hiding himself in the Time of Proscription, his Perfumes betray'd him. L. Plorius.

May the God, and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath already touch'd your Heart with

The Epistle Dedicatory.

a Sense of his Glory, enrich you with all spiritual Blessings, and make you to abandon more and more in Faith, in Love, and in all Goodness: May that Great Shepherd of Souls enlighten your Understanding with greater Brightness, raise your Soul above this transitory World, teach you to despise the Things that are seen, and fill you with earnest Longings after those which are not seen; that after having serv'd your Generation here, your immortal Part may be admitted to the Enjoyment and Embraces of the Holy Trinity, the Festivals of Seraphim, to Mount Sion, to the City of the living God, to the innumerable Company of Angels, to the General-Assembly of the First born, which are written in Heaven, to the Spirits of Men made perfect, and to Jesus, the Mediator of the New-Testament, whose Blood speaks better Things than that of Abel. So wishes,

S I R,

Your Affectionate Friend,

And Servant,

ANTH. HORNECK.



THE P R E F A C E.



THE vast Number of Books about the *Sacrament of the Eucharist*, as it shews the Richness of the Subject, so it discovers the Zeal and Industry of good Men, to uphold the Power of Religion in these *perilous Times*, as they are call'd by the *Apostle of the Gentiles*. And indeed, if we consider the Influence this Ordinance hath yet on Men, who have not altogether sold themselves to do Evil, and are not gone so far as to make a Mock of Religion, it is no small Motive to busy our selves in recommending and pressing the frequent Use of it. I look upon it as a special Providence of God, that in this Iron Age, wherein Men have made a Shift to baffle all the Rules of Discipline, they have yet some Reverence for this Ordinance, inso-much, that if we can oblige them to make use of it, we may entertain great Hopes of their future Sobriety and Seriousness. The Generality shun it, because they are loth to shake

The P R E F A C E.

shake Hands with their looser Lives; and they are sensible, that the Use of this Ordinance, and a disorderly Conversation, are Things inconsistent, and incompatible; and therefore could we perswade them to come, we might promise our selves a rich and plentiful Harvest, there being nothing more likely, than the Fruitfulness of that Ground which is water'd with the *Blood of Jesus*. What I publish here, is in order to make good my Promise in a lesser Piece, call'd *The Fire of the Altar*; and when a Man hath once, either rashly, or premeditately, made himself a Debtor to the Publick, I think it is Justice and good Manners, if he be able, to discharge the Obligation. I do not hereby discourage the Reader from perusing other Mens Labours, (he'll possibly think there is no Danger) but desire only to promote and encourage the Good he reaps from exacter Compositions. I have, in the following Discourse, endeavour'd, at once, to inform the Reader's Judgment, to direct his Practice, and to satisfy his Curiosity; the first, by giving a rational Account of the Nature of the *Eucharist*; the second, by taking Notice of the particular Duties requisite in Communicants; and the third, by adding some Historical Passages about the Rise and Progress of some Rites and Opinions relating to this *Sacrament*. I had Thoughts, toward the latter End, to have added a Chapter about *confessing of Sin* to a faithful Minister of God's Word, before Men receive the Communion; but fearing the Book would swell to an unconscionable Bulk,

The P R E F A C E.

Bulk, I was forc'd to stop where I did. That which made me desirous to have said something of that Subject, was, because I find, by Converse, that some *Romish Priests* have of late been very busy with several Members of our Church, and made a mighty Stir about this Sacramental Confession, as if our Church were defective in a fundamental Point, because we press no such Thing upon our Communicants. But not to mention that *Mountebanks* do what they can to discourage Men from consulting with discreet and rational *Physicians*, we do not, indeed, make this *Confession of Sins to a Minister*, absolutely necessary to Salvation; nor do we enjoin it upon Pain of Damnation, because we have no Warrant for it in Scripture, which our Church makes the only Rule of her Faith; but that we do not encourage this Confession, as a Thing very convenient, nay, in some Cases necessary, especially where the Sinner's Conscience is burden'd, and oppress'd, and labours under Doubts, is a malicious Slander and Calumny. We find nothing in the Apostle's *Rubrick* for celebrating 1 Cor. 11.
the Holy Communion, concerning this v. 28.
Confession. But all that he saith, is this, *Let a Man examine himself, and so let him eat of that Bread, and drink of that Cup*; which Christians may certainly do, without confessing their Sins to a Minister. Yet where they are gravell'd in this Examination, or find themselves in Perplexity about their spiritual Concerns, Reason requires that they should come to the Priest, who is appointed by God as *Director*
of

The P R E F A C E

of their Consciences; and where we find that their Souls are touch'd with Remorse, and their Resolution is great and magnanimous, to shake off the Burthen of their Pollutions; and to give themselves up to the Conduct of a better Master, there we are ready to impart to them that Absolution which God hath bid us pronounce in his Name to their Comfort, and whereof there is as full and satisfactory a *Form* in our *Liturgy*, as any Christian can desire. It's granted, we do not, as in the *Roman Church*, join the Merits of the *Virgin-Mary*, and of the *Saints*, to those of *Christ* in our Absolution, because we dare not, for fear of committing a heinous Sin; but we absolve, as far as we are impower'd by the Word of God; and he that leaves this Fountain, and hews out to himself Cisterns which can hold no Water, is in Danger of being forsaken by God, and left to his own Delusions and vain Imaginations.



T H E

THE
Crucified Jesus.

CHAP. I.

Of the Name of this Ordinance, and why Distribution and Participation of Bread and Wine, usual in Christian Assemblies, is called *The Lord's Supper.*

THE CONTENTS.

All Societies of Men have certain Badges, whereby they are united among themselves, and distinguished from others. The Sacraments of the Christian Church are such Badges. This particularly, where Bread and Wine is administered, call'd The Lord's Supper, for four Reasons. Tho' celebrated in the Morning, yet may still be call'd the Lord's Supper. Some Remarks upon its Institution at Night. Divers Names given to this Sacrament by the Ancients. An Account how this Supper differs from Common Suppers. The Necessity of our giving Attendance at this Ordinance. The proper Dress of the Soul, which renders it a welcome Guest at this Sacrament. The Prayer.

I. **I**T is St. *Austin's* Observation, that Men can never unite in the Bond of Religion, whether true or false, except they agree in some outward Sign or Badge, as a Character of their Concord and Combination;

Lib. 19. contr.

Faust. c. 11.

nation; to this Purpose it was, that even the *Druids* of Old, as *Cesar* tells us, having made their Sacrifices the Testimony of their Union, whenever any of their People did obstinately disobey their Orders, the Punishment they inflicted on them, was, to interdict them the Use and Participation of their Sacrifices; and whoever fell under this Censure, was counted criminal and impious; his Company, Discourse, and Conversation shunned as the Plague; and he deprived of the Benefit of the Law, and looked upon as infamous and scandalous. Such visible Badges the Son of God, when he left the Earth, thought fit to give to the Christian World, to be Witnesses of their Union and Communion, viz. *Baptism*, and the *Supper of the Lord*; the former, as a Mark of their being admitted into his Church; the other, to advance and increase that Spiritual Life, of which the former may be supposed to have sown the Seed, and laid the happy Foundation; and though all that come and apply themselves to the Use of these Ordinances, are not therefore true Members of his Church, or lively Stones in that Spiritual Building; yet as these Mysteries, and Frequenting of them, are standing Witnesses of their having addicted themselves, and vowed Obedience to Christ's Religion; so they are Means, whereby they may not only arrive to a lively Sense of their Duty, but whereby their Union and Communion may be promoted, and proclaimed to all that are without the Pale of Christian Congregations. And were the ancient Discipline of the Church revived, and reduced to its former Lustre and Glory, we may rationally conclude, that to be deprived of the Use of these two, especially of the latter, would be more infamous and grievous, than it was among the *Heathen* to be excluded from the Participation of their Sacrifices; as the Benefits, of which People are deprived thereby, are of greater Consequence and Concernment, than those which the *Pagans* expected from their unreasonable Service.

The Crucified Jesus.

3

II. As to the *Sacred Rite of Distributing and Participating of Bread and Wine*, universally practised in the Christian Church, and which is the proper Subject of the ensuing Discourse, the Reason why it is called *The Lord's Supper*, is,

1. *Because the Lord of Lords, and King of Kings, he whose Name is wonderful, the Lord Jesus Christ, hath solemnly instituted and ordained it.* It was the fatal Night, when the Jews, prompted by the Prince of Darkness, and blind with Rage and Envy, were come out against him, as against a Thief, with Staves and Spears, to hurry him to Death and the Cross; just before this amazing Tragedy began, having eaten the Passover with his Disciples, and by so doing put an End to the Types and Shadows of the *Ceremonial Law*, he took Bread and Wine, and gave it to all the Church then present, and bid them eat and drink of it, and in so doing, have higher Thoughts, and reflect upon all the Instances of his Love to their immortal Souls, and teach their Successors to do so too. This Jesus, who by AB. iii. 36. wicked Hands was crucified, and whom God hath made both Lord and Christ, was the Master and Author of this Feast, and from him it justly derives its Name.

2. *Because the End of this Eating and Drinking is to commemorate the Death of the Lord Jesus.* As the End of the Passover, under the Law, was to remember the great Deliverance from the *Egyptian Bondage*; and that of the *Feast of Tabernacles*, their being guided through the Wilderness by a Cloud, and their Ancestors dwelling in Booths and Tents: As the *Feast of Trumpets* was instituted, either by way of Anticipation, that they might remember afterwards how the Walls of *Jericho* fell; or to refresh their Minds with *Isaac's Sacrifice*, (an Emblem of the *Messiah's Death*) and the *Feast of Weeks*, or *Pentecost*, was ordained as a Testimony of their Gratitude for a plentiful Harvest, and to put them in mind of the Liberty they gained, when God gave them

the Law, and entred into a Covenant with them; and that of *Purim*, to bring into their Memories, how they were rescued from the Cruelty of *Haman* the *Amalekite*; and that of the *Dedication*, to suggest to them the Rebuilding of the Temple: So the Lord Jesus enjoined and recommended the keeping of *this Feast* to his Followers, that they might remember, how their Master loved them, and made his Death a Demonstration of Love; How he died to make them happy, and denied himself in all the Contents of Life, to make theirs blessed and glorious for ever; How he submitted to the Power of the Grave, to purchase their comfortable Resurrection; and fell a Sacrifice, that they might have Hopes of Pardon thro' his Blood: A Remembrance so just, that if this Charity deserves not frequent Commemoration, no Mercy, no Benefit, no Favour, no Providence can deserve it; for this goes beyond all, that the Word of God calls glorious and beneficial to Mankind.

3. *It's the Lord's Supper, because the Lord Jesus is Meat and Drink in this Feast*; Meat indeed, and Drink indeed, as the Expression is, *Joh. vi. 11.* for tho' that Chapter speaks not directly of this Supper, yet the Phrases and Modes of Speech used there, may very piously be applied to what is represented by the Elements in this Feast; for the Benefits, Advantages, and Emoluments of Christ's Death, are Food so proper to a religious Soul, and a gracious Mind feeds so savourly upon these, that nothing deserves the Name of Spiritual Meat and Drink, so much as these; and indeed, these nourish and feed the Soul, make her strong and lively; these are her Cordials and Restoratives, and in the Nature of *David's Oil*, *Psal. civ. 15.* which make her Face to shine.

4. *It's the Lord's Supper, because the Nourishment and Strength it affords or yields, is by the Influence of the Lord Jesus.* He sends his Spirit into the Soul, that comes to his Feast hungry and thirsty, and longing after the Riches of God's Love, whereby the Soul is inflamed to love him, who bought her at this dear Rate; and that Love produces Peaceableness and Gentleness, and Faith,

Faith, and Purity, and Sincerity, and Delight in good Works, which are excellent Signs of the Soul's growing strong in the Use of the Spiritual Food. The Holy Spirit of *Christ* destroys the reigning Power of Sin in her, and the Government of the Flesh; for the leaner this grows, and the more the Authority of it is diminished, the better the Soul thrives, and the more vigorous and active it becomes in all its Faculties.

III. Tho' to call this Feast, *The Lord's Supper*, when it is in most Churches celebrated in the Morning, seems to be improper; yet the Reason why it still bears the Name, is, because the same substantial Actions are still observ'd in the Celebration of it, that were used by *Christ* and his *Disciples* at his first Institution in the Night; and not only the same Actions, but the same End and Design is kept on foot, which we find in its first Foundation; and whenever it is celebrated, it's still in imitation of that *Supper*, and that *Supper* is still remembered in it. The Reason why *Christ*, in instituting of it, made use of the Night, which gave it the Name of a *Supper*, was, because it was to be succedaneous to the *Passover*, which, according to Custom, was eaten at Night, as the Deliverance which the *Jews* remembered then, was perform'd by the Angel at Night: And as the *Passover* represented the *Old Covenant* or *Testament*, and this *Feast* the *New*; so it was fit that the latter should be instituted immediately after the Celebration of the former, that both being set together, their different Signification might more plainly appear, and Men might see, what Mercies they might expect from the bringing in of a better Covenant. This being the Occasion of *Christ's* celebrating this Feast at Night, and consequently the Reason ceasing with the *Typical Passover*, the *Christian Churches*, in process of time, took the Liberty of Celebrating it at all Seasons, as they saw it either necessary or expedient. And though what I have said about the *Passover*, is the principal Reason, why *Christ* made choice of the Night for this Institu-

tion; yet, for ought we know, it might be with an intent also to hint to us, how by this Sacrament, the *Night of Ignorance*, which sate heavy on the Minds of most Men, would be dispell'd; that by *Night* is sometimes understood, the *Night of Ignorance*, in Scripture, is evident from *Matth. iv. 16. Es. ix. 1, 2. Rom. xiii. 12.* and that by the devout and religious Use of this Sacrament, *our Ignorance* is in a great Measure cured, Experience is a sufficient Testimony: Hereby certainly our Minds are signally enlightned, and we behold the Wisdom, Love, and Goodness of God, discover the Methods and Ways of Salvation, get clear Apprehensions of the Mysteries of our Faith, and see how inconsistent the Works of Darknes are with this solemn Remembrance of the Death of *Christ*; hereby we come to feel the Power of God toward them that believe, and find out the Secret of the Union, that is betwixt *Christ* and his true Followers; and learn to know, that what is said in the Word of God, concerning the tender Regard of *Christ* to his Church and Friends, is no Fable. Add to all this, that *Christ* made choice of the *Night*, possibly to put us in mind of his sudden Coming to Judgment, which is frequently expressed in Scripture by his coming in the *Night*, *Mar. xiii. 35, 36. Luk. xii. 38, 39. 1 Thess. v. 2. Rev. iii. 3.* nor is it an unsuitable Reflexion in this Sacrament to contemplate his Coming to judge the World; for tho' that Coming may strike Terror into Men, that put the evil Day far from them, and prepare not for their Lord's Coming, yet to a Soul enlightned and sanctified, it cannot but afford Matter of Comfort, to think at such times, that the same *Jesus*, who was crucified, will e'er long appear in Glory with all his mighty Angels, to give those that have followed him in the Regeneration, full Possession of the purchas'd Glory. However, at the best, the Celebration of this Feast at *Night* was but a circumstantial Thing, and therefore the Church is not obliged to keep to it, circumstantial Things depending much upon Convenience, or Inconveniency, which vary in several Ages;

and

and this was the Reason, that though Standing at the Eating of the *Passover* was a commanded Circumstance, *Exod. xii. 11.* yet the *Jewish Church* in After-Ages varied from it, even by *Christ's* own Approbation, and turned that Posture into Leaning, as I shall have Occasion to shew more largely, in the Chapter about *Kneeling at the Communion*. The Church therefore sins not in celebrating this Feast at any other time, especially in a Circumstance barely related, not commanded. Yet, as I said before, because this Spiritual Feast, kept up in all Churches, is still in Imitation of *Christ's Supper*, and that *Supper* is religiously remembred in it, and the same essential Things, together with the Scope, Drift, and Design of all, are still preserved, it is not unfitly called the *Lord's Supper* still; so that if any Man seems to be contentious about the Name, *We have no such Custom, neither the Churches of God,* 1 Cor. xii. 16.

IV. Yet this is no Argument, but that it may also lawfully be called and expressed by other Names; and this we find the Christian Churches have done from time to time. *Tertullian* was the first that call'd it a *Sacrament*, taking the Name from the *Oaths* the *Roman Soldiers* took, that they would be true and faithful to their *Emperor*; and the rather, because we vow Allegiance and Fidelity in this Ordinance, to the Great Master that died for us. Others have call'd it an *Oblation*, because we offer up our humble Prayers and Supplications to the God and Father of our Lord *Jesus Christ*, and our Souls and Bodies too, when we remember his beneficial Death. Sometimes it has been call'd a *Sacrifice*, because it is not only a Commemoration of the wonderful *Sacrifice* of *Christ's* Death, but we chearfully offer up the Sacrifice of our Praises for this inestimable Mercy. The Name of *Communion* occurs frequently in the Writings of the Ancients, because all sincere Christians are hereby tied in a Bond of mutual Love, partipate of the same Bread, are Fellow-Members of the Mystical Body of *Christ*, and have Communion with

Christ their Head, and enjoy all the same Benefits of his Death and Sufferings. The Word *Eucharist* is used as often as any other, because Thanksgiving, and Magnifying the Goodness, Mercy, and Charity of God the Father, Son, and the Holy Ghost, are great Part of the Service here. The Name *Mafs*, which they of the *Roman* Persuasion, and even the *Lutheran* Churches made use of, as it was not known in the Church for the first Four hundred Years after *Christ*, so the Original of it was this; When the *Lord's Supper* was to be celebrated after Sermon, the Deacon, or some other Officer of the Church, called to the People, that did not, or were not to receive, in these Words, *Ite, missa est; Depart, the Congregation is dismiss'd*. In time, that which was only a Preliminary Circumstance of the *Lord's Supper*, was applied to the whole Office, and the Service was call'd *Missa*, or *Mafs*, a Word which the *Romanists* make a great Stir with, and turn into a perfect Charm, and a monstrous Sacrifice, to the great Disparagement of *Christ's* Sufferings, and the Benefits that accrue thereby to true Believers. Some of their Writers make it a *Hebrew* Word, and fetch it from the *Old Testament*; others derive it from the *Greek*, others from the *Northern Language*; and though it expresses less than any of those Names we mention'd before, yet hath this swallowed up all the rest, and the more Superstitious in the *Roman Church* are almost afraid to call it by any other Name; and the *Mafs* is that which both Young and Old, both Learned and Unlearned among them, have most frequently in their Mouths, tho' few of the Vulgar know what it means. I omit here many other Names appropriated by Writers to this Mystery; such as *Collect*, *O Economy*, *Liturgy*, *Dominical*, *Agenda*, *Anaphora*, *Synaxis*, &c. partly, because I intend no Critical History; and partly, because by the Names I have already spoken of, this Sacrament is usually known in the *Western Churches*. That we do so often call it a *Mystery*, is, because the Things discover'd and intimated here, do altogether depend upon Divine Revelation, and are such as Flesh and

and Blood understood not, and the Secrets of which, none, but a Person enlightned by the Spirit of God, apprehends to any purpose, and which transcended all the *Arcana*, or hidden Points of Heathen Divinity.

V. The Name of the *Lord's Supper* puts us in mind that this Holy Feast differs from Common Suppers.

1. In that Common Suppers are for the Support of *Nature*, this for the Support of *Grace* and Goodness in our Souls. The former are intended for the Strengthening of the *Body*, this for the Corroboration of our *Faith*, and *Hope*, and *Love*. Our Common Supper represents to us the *Ordinary Providence* of God, which opens its Hand, and fills the Desire of every living Thing; This, God's *Extraordinary Dispensation*, which shews at what Cost and Charges we are made the Children of God, and fitted for everlasting Habitations. The former gives us an Account of the Blessings of God's *Left*, this of the Favours of his *Right Hand*: The former bids us look into the *nether*, this into the *upper Springs* of the Divine Clemency.

2. In our Common Suppers, our Spirits may unbend, and our Minds and Tongues take Liberty of thinking and speaking of Things relating to our necessary Employments in the World; in this, our Thoughts must raise, mount up with Wings as Eagles, pierce the Clouds, and fix on the Riches of Divine Love, retire from the World, view God and his glorious Attributes, and unite with that excellent Object, improve themselves into Contemplation, and adore the Mystery of Redemption. In the former, no other Preparation is required, but what we are to bring with us to common Affairs and Business, *i. e.* Gravity and Sobriety; but in this, the Heart must be prepared, the Soul chafed, the Affections warmed, Prayers offered. Ejaculations press into God's Presence, and Self-examination disposes the Soul for the Visits of the Holy Ghost, that it may be a worthy Guest at such a Table; and the rather, because God is in a special manner present here; for where-
ever

ever Providence displays its brighter Beams of Love, there God is eminently present; that makes Heaven what it is, because there the Divine Goodness shines most gloriously. In this Sacrament are set before us more than ordinary Characters of God's Love; the Angels of Heaven, saith St. *Chrysostom*, stand round about the Altar, and, while the Minister of the Ordinance is praising him that lives for ever and ever, fall down at the same time, rejoycing at the Blessings, and the *Manna* which falls down from Heaven on the Children of Men; so that here we may cry out, as the Patriarch did of *Bethel*, *How Dreadful is this Place!*

The Preceding Considerations reduced to Practice.

I. **T**HIS Sacrament being a Feast prepared by the greatest Prince for his Servants, those Servants must needs be inexcusable, that refuse to give their Attendance here. I do not deny, but there may be just Excuses, and lawful Causes of our Absence; such as Sicknes, Weaknes, Faintnes, and Distempers, Pains, Aches, and some sudden Accidents and Disasters, which will not suffer us to fix our Thoughts on so Reverend an Ordinance; but these happening against our Wills, and importing no wilful Neglect, God bears with us under such Circumstances; but to act, as if we did not hear our Master call, and to suffer the World to put a Stop to our Coming; to be so enamoured with our Profits and sensual Satisfactions, as not to think ourselves concerned in the Duty; to refuse Approaching, because we are loth to be at the Pains of searching our Hearts, and trying our Ways; to neglect Coming, because we are loth to sequester our Thoughts from sub-lunary Objects, and to part with our Sins; to absent ourselves, because we relish the Enjoyments of this Life, before this Celestial Food; this is to slight what God esteems, and to spurn at the greatest Mercy; this is to thrust away Salvation, as if it were worth No-
thing,

thing, and to undervalue the Pains God takes to bring us to himself; and what God must think of such Scor-ners, I need not tell you; for yourselves may guess, except you believe God to be Stone or Stock, how he must resent it; and one would think, it should cause some sad Thoughts within you, if you believe what he saith, 1 Sam. ii. 30. *They that love me, I will honour; but they that despise me, shall be lightly esteemed.*

II. When the Church invites us to this Feast, we must suppose, that our Lord himself makes an Address to us, as it is in *Matth. xxii. 4. Behold, I have prepared my Dinner, my Oxen and my Fatlings are killed, and all Things are ready, come ye to the Marriage.* This Holy Ordinance is the Marriage Feast, which declares our being joined to the Son of God, the King immortal, invisible, blessed for evermore. *Hearken therefore, O Daughter, and consider, forget also thine own People, and thy Father's House; so shall the King greatly desire thy Beauty; for he is thy Lord, and worship thou him.* This Feast requires suitable Garments, not Tyrian Purple, not Persian Silks, nor that outward Adorning with broi-dered Hair, or Gold, or Pearl, or costly Array; but the Ornament of a meek and quiet Spirit, which in the Sight of God is of great Price. A Garment of Sackcloth is a more glorious Sight in the Eyes of him, who is the Master of this Feast, than all the Bravery of the tinkling Ornaments of the Daughters of Sion, and a contrite Heart invites his gracious Aspect; and this the Primitive Believers were so sensible of, that before their coming to this Feast, they humbled their Souls with Fasting; and as coarse and uncomely as this Garb appears to sensual Men, yet *He that is the lofty and holy one, who inhabits Eternity, hath declared his Liking and Approbation of it; For to that Man will I look, who is of an humble and a contrite Spirit, and trembles at my Word, Isa. lxvi. 2. Isa. lvii. 15.* We read of a Garment of Praise too, *Isa. lxi. 3.* a Garment, which the Angels of Light are adorned and decked withall; a Garb so pleasing,

pleasing, that the Eternal Father smiles on them, and it smells sweeter than that of *Esau*; God, like old *Isaac*, takes Notice of it, and blesses them. *St. Paul* understood this, and wore it constantly. Hence it is, that we find him so liberal in praising the *Cross of Christ*; with this he seems always transported, and he seldom talks of Christ without Raptures, an Object upon which he thought he could never say enough. Being rapt up into the third Heaven, he had heard the melodious Voice of the *four and twenty Elders*, and the new Song they sung to the Lamb that was slain; Thou art worthy to take the Book, and to open the Seals thereof, for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy Blood out of every Kindred, and Tongue, and People, and Nation, Rev. v. 9. and he could not have a better Pattern. And now that we speak of Garments, that make us welcome Guests at this Table, we must not forget the Garment or Ornament of good Works, which *St. Paul* takes Notice of, 1 Tim. ii. 10. There are the shining Robes our Souls must be ambitious of; these adorn our Profession, charm Spectators, attract Followers, and are apt to make People in Love with Goodness: And what is more, change us into the same Image with the Author and Finisher of our Faith, whose Providence and Employment was going about and doing good, as we are told, *Act. x. 38.* and consequently, this cannot but be a proper Ornament to appear in at this Banquet: And of this Nature is the white Garment we read of, *Eccles. ix. 8.* or the Garment of Innocence and Purity, whereby we hate the Garment spotted by the Flesh, and keep Consciences void of Offence toward God, and toward Men. In these Garbs we may boldly shew ourselves at the Table of our Lord, and expect the same Welcome, that the Spouse received in the Canticles, *Cant. iv. 10, 11. How fair is thy Love, my Sister, my Spouse! How much better is thy Love than Wine, and the Smell of all thine Ointments, than all Spices! Thy Lips, O my Spouse, drop as the Honey-Comb; Honey and Milk are under thy Tongue, and the Smell of thy Garment is like the Smell of Lebanon.*

The P R A Y E R.

O Holy and Merciful Saviour, Merciful beyond Example, who treatest me as thy Child, hast prepared a Table for me, and made my Cup run over ! Be thou my Shepherd, let me want no Grace, no Mercy, no Assistance that's necessary for me in the prosecuting of mine Eternal Happiness. Dress me with thy Robes, adorn me with the Ensigns of thy Favour. Let me rejoice at the Supper thou hast prepared for me. Teach me to entertain thy Call with Gladness. Let me see clearly what thou hast prepared for them that love thee. Thou knowest my stubborn and lazy Heart, rouse it from its Slumber ; melt it by the Fire of thy Love ; breathe upon these dry Bones, and they shall live : Let me not with *Esau* prefer a Morsel of Bread, eaten in secret, before my Birth-Right to Eternal Glory. Let me consider thy Condescension in inviting such a Wretch to sup with thee. Let not the evil Examples I see before me, be any Temptation to me. Uphold me by thy Right Hand. Let me dread thine Anger, and count it a greater Disgrace to be despised by thee, than to be made the Filth and Off-Scouring of all Things. Give me a just Esteem of thy Favour, let me prefer it before all the Contents of this present World. Let me feel that thy loving Kindness is better than Life ; this Life will fade away, but thy Mercy endureth for ever. Let Goodness and Mercy follow me all the Days of my Life, and make me dwell in thy House for ever. *Amen.*

C H A P. II.

Of the Mystery of Christ's Instituting this Sacrament, in that very Night in which he was betrayed.

The CONTENTS.

The Treachery of Judas : His Character, and how that is imitated by Nominal Christians at this Day. Christ betrayed to wicked Men, and to Devils; betrayed partly for filthy Lucre, partly for his unchangeable Integrity. The same is still done by Hypocrites in Religion. This Sacrament instituted that very Night, when he was betrayed, for three Reasons. The different Appearance of Sin, when surveyed slightly, and when considered in its Designs and Tendencies. While we detest the Treason of Judas, we are to take heed, we do not become guilty of the same Crime. The Prayer.

I. **T**Hough in the first Chapter I have already hinted the Reason why Christ made use of the Night, to institute this Holy Sacrament, yet the Evangelists laying an Emphasis or Weight upon his instituting of it *that Night* in which he was betrayed, it's fit we should search into the Mystery of it: But before we can do this, some Circumstances of that Treason must be considered, which will give Light to Christ's Design in pitching upon that Time, and no other. The Person that did venture on this Height of Impiety, was *Judas Iscariot*, a Man, who, by this Treason, hath indeed left an everlasting Name behind him, but such an one, as all Ages must detest, and talk of with greater Indignation, than the *Heathens* did of *Herostratus*, who, to make himself illustrious by doing Mischief, burnt the famous Temple of *Diana*: By this Man,

Man, the ever-blessed JESUS was betrayed; and if you will allow me to give a true Character of him, some of us in this Glass may see their own Treachery and Deformity.

1. He was betrayed by one, who made Profession of Religion, but was a Hypocrite, &c. his Actions contradicted his Profession, professing one Thing, he did another, and seeming to be good, he proved a Devil. Hypocrisy at this Day makes Men Traitors to Christ, even their Coming to the Temple of the Lord, and Adhering to their known Sins; their Frequenting the Ordinances of God, and being Unconcerned at his Promises and Threatnings; their Believing the Articles of Religion, and Acting contrary to the Design of them; their Finding Fault with those Sins in others, which they have no Aversion from in themselves; their Speaking honourably of God with their Lips, and Dispensing with Affronts put upon him in their Practices: What can we call this, but Judas-like to betray the Son of Man with a Kiss; to say *Hail, Master*, and deliver him to be crucified; to cry *Hosanna*, and by and by, *Away with him*; at once to embrace and to deride him; to hug and to contemn him; to bow the Knee to him, and mock him; and in Imitation of the rude Soldiery, to cloathe him with Purple, and to strike and buffet him?

2. He was betray'd by one, who, by no Argument of Love or Mercy, could be wrought into a sincere Reformation: He had seen the Miracles of his Master; himself, by his Master's Influence, did Wonders, and he saw Divinity shine in him; nor was Christ wanting in warning, teaching, instructing, intreating, and admonishing of him; yet nothing could prevail with him to purge out the Leaven of Malice and Wickedness; and is not Christ betrayed this way by Thousands at this Day? *He that despises you*, saith he to his Servants and Instruments, *despises me*; and then, if his Calling to Men, by his Ministers, by signal Providences, by Mercies, by Afflictions, by their Consciences, by their Infirmities

firmities and Sicknesses, Weakness and approaching Death, will not make them sensible of their Duty; if in Despite of his Endeavours to keep them from being undone, they scorn both his Yoke and his Love, what greater Treason can they be guilty of? Especially, where they make his Mercy a Shelter for their Sin; are therefore *evil*, because he is *good*; and are tempted by his Patience to be refractory and obstinate.

II. He was betrayed both to wicked Men and Devils.

1. To *wicked Men*, such as the Scribes and Elders of the *Jews*, his sworn Enemies; and this Way he is still betrayed; for though there be no *Scribes*, no *Pharisees* at this Day, yet there are atheistical and sensual Men, who seeing Christ's Religion made a Cloak for ill Designs, and bad Practices, take Occasion from thence to speak evil of it; as *David* having professed much Zeal to God, and falling afterwards into very monstrous Sins, made the Enemies of the Lord blaspheme, and laughed at the Advantages the *Jews* boasted of, above the Doctrines and Principles of their Neighbour-Idolaters. Indeed, to see Men wicked, and vain under a Shew of Piety, and while they profess to be Followers of *Jesus*, live directly contrary to the Example and Precepts of the Holy *Jesus*, makes that pretended Devotion ridiculous; and instead of converting Men of loose Principles, drives them farther off, and tempts them to think all Religion to be nothing but a Cheat: And though this Inference is unjust and absurd, yet still these dangerous Inferences will be laid at their Door, who either contradicted the Principles of their Religion by their Actions, or made it a Stalking-Horse to ill Designs and Purposes.

2. He was betrayed to Devils too, who seeing him in the Hands of bloody and barbarous Men, left and forsaken, as it were, by Heaven, and that Divinity which dwelt there, took the greater Boldness to set upon him by Temptations; and as these Foes watch Opportunities,

nities, and then molest most, when Men are least able to controul their Insolence; so seeing the Saviour of the World thus seemingly forsaken, we may suppose they assaulted him with greater Fierceness; partly, because his Design had been to destroy their Kingdom; and partly, because he had so often dispossest'd them of their Habitations: It is therefore the Opinion of the Learned Men, that in the Garden of *Gethsemane*, when Christ fell into trembling Fits, the Devil appeared to him in a visible and most dismal Shape, which occasion'd an Angel's Descent from above to comfort him; but whether it were so or no, the Fiend seeing him betray'd, and deliver'd into the Hands of his own Slaves, without all Peradventure triumph'd in his Misery, and insulted over him with greater Scorn; and, in Imitation of *David's* Enemies, cry'd, *Aha, so would he have it*; so doth the Hypocrite betray Christ to the Devil, who hearing the painted Christian talk of Mortification and Contempt of the World, the two Fundamental Points of his Master's Religion, and seeing him act point-blank against them, doth not only deride and despise Religion, but casts Reproaches on Christ himself, as if the Motives he was come to give the World, were impotent, and unable to effect that mighty Change the Gospel speaks of, and which the Son of God used to glory in, while the World was so happy as to enjoy his Presence. The Devils rejoyce to see Christ thus defeated in his grand Designs of Reformation; and tho' he is in Glory at this Time, yet the Hypocrites Actions raise a Persecution against him, and put the Devils upon new Insolencies against his Honour and Majesty: What, say they, are these thy Servants and Disciples? Are these the Men that are changed from *Glory to Glory*? What do they more than the Disciples of Hell? And if the little Pleasures of the World, I hold out to them, can preponderate, and do more with them, than the Arguments of thy Death, and the Motives drawn from a glorious, end-

less Life, Where is thy Power, or wherein hath thy Kingdom the Advantage of my Empire?

III. He was betray'd partly for filthy Lucre, partly for his unchangeable Integrity.

1. For *Filthy Lucre*. The Love of Money, the Root of all Evil, was the Cause of it. The Thirty Pieces of Silver invited the Traytor to this Enterprize: So powerful is Gold and Silver, that at this Day it tempts Men to betray the Son of God; for we see they care not what becomes of Religion, so their Purfes swell; and are indifferent, whether God's Honour be maintained or no, so their Corn, and Wine, and Oyl increaseth: This makes Men venture on the foulest Sins, and draws them into Actions, which should not be so much as named among Christians: This tempts them to oppress, to cheat, to flatter, to dissemble, to lye, and to forswear themselves, to comply with the sinful Humours of Men, and to debase their Souls to the dirtiest and most disingenuous Actions; yet all this while, such will be counted Christians and Protestants, and of the true Religion, against which the Gates of Hell shall not be able to prevail.

2. For his *unchangeable Integrity*. He would not allow *Judas* to profess himself his Disciple, and cherish base and covetous Desires; the *Lord Jesus*, that knew his Heart, we may suppose, bid him either leave the Profession, or with his Profession cleanse the Inside of the Cup and Platter; convinced him, that the Love of God, and that of the World, were incompatible, and did mutually destroy each other: This the ill-natur'd Disciple could not brook, and because his Master would not give him Leave to enjoy God's Favour, and his own Sins together, he betray'd him. This is the Case of Counterfeit Christians at this Day; because *Christ* will not permit them to blend his Religion with their Delight in Vanity, will not allow them to serve *God* and *Mammon*; they expose his
Religion

Religion to that Contempt and Scorn we have mention'd, as if they would be reveng'd upon God for being so unkind to them, as not to permit an Alliance to be made betwixt the Temple of God and Idols, betwixt *Christ* and *Belial*, betwixt Light and Darkness.

IV. Why *Christ* would institute this Sacrament that very Night, in which he was betray'd, will appear from these following Reasons.

1. To shew, *That he delighted not in the Death of a Sinner*, therefore the same Night that he was betray'd, he provided a Remedy that Sinners might not die, and whereby the Offenders might be restor'd to Life and Happiness, if they did not willfully reject it. That Pardon and Deliverance, and Freedom from everlasting Death, is offer'd, tender'd, and convey'd, and seal'd in this Sacrament to every Sinner, that is unfeignedly resolv'd to be Friends with God upon his own Terms, is confess'd by all the Christian World. It was therefore instituted that Night that *Judas* did betray him, to shew, that if even *Judas*, and all such Traytors, that should some way or other imitate him in his Actions, either had come, or should for the future come and throw away their Weapons, their Enmity and their Arms, quit their Hostility, and humble themselves before their offended Father, that they shall not miss of Mercy and Forgiveness, than which there cannot be a greater Sign, that he delights not in their Ruin: That Night when he was persecuted, to provide a Refuge for his Persecutors: That Night, when his Enemies were like to practise Treason, to think on a way how that Treason might be pardon'd: That Night, when they were going to undo themselves, to provide a Pool in which they might wash and be clean: This surely spoke his Desire, that they might not die. Wonderful Goodness! He foresaw the Wounds they would give to their Souls, and before they give themselves those Wounds, he prepares a Plaister to heal them: He

saw how fierce and violent the Poyson was they were going to take, and at the same time provides an Antidote: He saw they were going to starve their Souls, and at the same time orders Meat and Drink to be made ready to preserve them from Expiring.

2. He instituted it *that very Night* to admonish us, that when we come to receive these Holy Elements, we should remember with Grief and Sorrow, how often we have betray'd his Glory to his Enemies, and by the Heinousness of the Sin, be frighted from Attempting the like again; and what can be more reasonable at such Times, than to reflect: *Ah, Wretch that I am! How like a Brute have I lived under the Name of a Christian! I have called my Master Lord, and have done mine own Will! I have called him Father, and when he hath bid me work in his Vineyard, have run away! I have professed Love to the Lord Jesus, and been asham'd of him and of his Gospel! I have seem'd a devout Worshipper of him, and been a Stranger to Self-denial! And when my Profit, Ease, or Credit have been in Danger, how have I left him with his Disciples, and fled! How have I betray'd him by such Cowardice! What Occasion of Reproach have I given to his Enemies! How have I hardned others in their Sins by such Doings! How have I made sensual Men despise that Noble Religion the Son of God seal'd with his dearest Blood! And shall I betray him any longer? Shall I still deliver him up to be mocked? Shall I dare to do such a barbarous Thing again? No, no, I'll confess Thee before Men, my dearest Lord, that thou may'st confess and own me in the last Day, before thy Father and his Holy Angels.*

3. He instituted this Sacrament that Night, to teach us, that we must do Good for Evil; Judas betrays him, and that very Night he is contriving, how Judas, if he would have accepted of the Offer, might be saved from everlasting Ruin: This was his Method and Course of Living in the World, to reward Unkindnesses with Tenderness and Compassion to the Offenders. The Jews cry, *Crucify him*, and he prays for them, *Father, forgive*

forgive them, for they know not what they do; Malchus, who came out against him to apprehend him, and as 'tis probable, was ruder than the rest, having his Ear cut off, by his miraculous Touch is restored to his former Soundness; Herod seeks to kill him, and at the same time he purges his Country from Devils and Diseases: This sure could not be done, but with an intent to shew us an Example; and except we do as he did, how can we be said to be his Followers? It's from this great Example, that the Apostle inferrs a Duty, Rom. xii. 21. Be not overcome with Evil, but overcome the Evil with Good; and we all know, who it was that told us, that in vain we call ourselves Children of God, except we do good to them that hate us, Matt. v. 44, 45.

The Preceding Considerations reduced to Practice.

I. **W**E see here, in what a different Shape Sin appears from what it did before, if the Nature, Tendency, and Design of it be rightly consider'd. That which before seem'd but a little Cloud, or Twilight, upon such a Prospect, will appear *Egyptian* Darkeness. Who of us makes any Thing of Hypocrisie? yet have we proved before, that it is a Betraying of the Son of God, especially if it be reigning and allow'd of. So it is with other Sins. The *Jews*, Mal. iii. 8. thought their Keeping back their Tythes, and Depriving the Priests and Ministers of the Lord of their Due, to be a trivial Thing, yet God speaks to them in Thunder, and calls it *Robbing* of the Almighty. *Will a Man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. Wherein have we robb'd thee? In Tythes and Offerings.* So they made Nothing of Offering the *Lame* and the *Blind*, but God calls it *Profanation* of his Name, Mal. i. 12. A wise Man therefore, and he that would not cheat himself in Matters of Salvation, must consider what Verdict God gives of such Sins, as the World makes little

of, and in so doing, will find how unsafe it is to venture on such Trespases, and what dangerous Things they are. Indeed, he that examines and ponders, what Name God gives to some Sins in Scripture, how he calls Covetousness, *Idolatry*, Ephes. v. 5. Disobedience, *Witchcraft*, 1 Sam. xv. 23. Unbelief under the Means of Grace, *trampling on, and treading under Foot the Son of God*, Heb. x. 29. Living in a known Sin, *being of the Devil*, 1 Joh. iii. 8. Sensuality, *Enmity to the Cross of Christ*, Phil. iii. 18. Apostacy, *Crucifying of Christ afresh*, Heb. vi. 6. Love of the World, *Adultery*, &c. Jam. iv. 4. must needs have other Apprehensions of such Sins, than the duller, or more vicious Sort of Mankind hath; and untill we do so, it's a Sign we have no Mind to be sincere Converts; till we look upon our Sins through the Glass of Scripture; till we give our Sins those Names, which he that cannot err, doth give them; till we begin to call them, what they are indeed; and our Hearts are concern'd and troubled about that, which such Names import; our Repentance is but lame and partial, and we obstruct our way to Mercy and Forgiveness, and prepare for being miserable in the midst of Flattering Hopes and Expectations.

II. As we do abhor and detest the Treason of *Judas*, so let's take heed, we become not Guilty of it ourselves: We are not in a Capacity of Acting that very Treason, that the ill-natur'd Disciple did, because Christ is not now on Earth, and the Circumstances of Time, and Place, and Government, do differ; yet how that Treason may be acted over again by a Behaviour and Conversation agreeable to that of *Judas*, hath been already shew'd; and whatever we do, let's not fall into the Snare, into which that unhappy Man did fall: His End, his Despair, the Terrors of his Mind, the Torments of his Conscience; the Contempt and Scorn of God and Men, he rush'd into, are sufficient Discouragements from that Hypocrisie,

crisise, which drove him on to those Precipices. To maintain invincible Loyalty to our Great Master, is not only our Duty, but our Interest. To promote whatever makes for his Honour and Glory, is that which becomes us, not only as we are his Subjects, but as we are redeemed with his Blood: So great a Mercy ought to crush every rebellious Thought in our Minds. Never had People a more gracious King; a King, which doth not only divide his Estate among his Subjects, but is resolved to advance them to the highest Dignities they are capable of. And what, if sometimes he doth afflict us? That doth not speak him a Tyrant, but a Father, or Physician rather, who lets us Blood to prevent Diseases, and launces our Wounds, that they may not fester and kill us. If he lays Burthens upon us, it is not to oppress our *Souls*, but our *Sins*; and if he makes us go through the Fire, it is not that the Flame may consume us, but that the Smoke may kill the Caterpillars and Locusts, that eat the wholesome Herbs of our Graces. It is not that he delights in our Groans, but that he is desirous of our Welfare; and when he scourges us, it is Necessity, and our own Good, that puts him upon using that Method, not a Fondness to exercise his Power and Authority.

The P R A Y E R.

O Blessed JESUS! When I look upon Thee, and behold Thy Beauty and Glory, I wonder how I have been able to conspire against Thee with Thine Enemies! How have I been led away by false Appearances, and listned to false Rumors, which sinful Men have spread abroad concerning Thee! Thou hast been represented to me as an Enemy to my Mirth, and Ease, and Plenty, and temporal Advantages,

and I have believed it, and run blindly with the Multitude to crucify Thee; I see, how against Reason, Conscience, Interest, and a thousand Obligations, I have acted! O forget the Injuries I have offered Thee! O remember no more the Treasons I have been guilty of! Never, never, will I wittingly or wilfully betray Thee again! Let all Guile, and Hypocrisie, and Double-dealings, be put away from me: Make me an *Israelite* indeed: Let Sincerity and Integrity ever preserve me. Make me willing to fore-go all Interests, so I may but have an Interest in the Love of Complacency. Let all Enmity, all Dissention, all Hostility betwixt us cease. I agree, not only to a Truce, but to an Eternal Peace: I know, Lord, the Danger of Breaking the Peace lies on my Side, who am naturally treacherous, fickle, and inconstant; but Thy Grace can cure that Inconstancy. Lord, stretch forth Thy mighty Arm, and hold me up, that I may never depart from Thee, may always love to be with Thee, always delight in Thy Presence, always rejoyce in Thy Love, and always seek Thy Honour, and Glory. *Amen.*
Amen.



CH A P. III.

Of the Place where the Lord's Supper is to be Eaten, the Church, and of Private Communion.

The CONTENTS.

The Publick Church, the fittest Place to receive the Lord's Supper in. This prov'd, from the Practice of the Apostles, and the succeeding Christians. The same prov'd from Reason, and the End for which Christ died. Private Communion first began in Times of Persecution. The Danger and Imprudence of those, who, Neglecting to receive it in Publick, do not think of it till they come to lie upon their Death-beds. What a Mercy it is that we have Publick Churches, where we may serve and worship God, without Fear or Molestation. Great Gravity and Devotion requir'd in the Publick Worship of God. The Prayer.

I. **T**HAT the Publick Church is the most proper, most warranted, and fittest Place to celebrate and eat the Lord's Supper in, seems to have been the constant Belief of the Christian Church, and they have grounded their Belief on the Apostle's Expostulation with the *Corinthians*, 1 *Cor.* xi. 20, 22. where speaking of their Coming together into one Place, and distinguishing Private Houses from the Church of God, he intimates a know Custom in that Age, to meet in certain Oratories, or Places appointed for Publick Worship, and there receive the Holy Symbols. That which is commonly objected of the great Improbability of Publick Buildings and Edifices, in Times of Persecution,

cution, such as the Apostles, and the Christians, for the first Three Centuries, had sad Experience of, seems to carry greater Weight than really it doth; for though we speak of Places appointed for Publick Worship, no Person of common Sense can imagine, that we mean, they had such stately and magnificent Buildings, as our Churches are at this Day, the Effects of Ease, and Peace, and Plenty: These came not in till *Constantine* procured the Churches Respite, and Freedom from their former Bondage; yet we may justly enough suppose, that even in those Days of Trouble, and calamitous Times, they either converted some spacious Upper-Room, in a charitable Believer's House, into a Church; or some good Christian gave, and dedicated his House for that Religious Use; or the Believers, by common Consent, turn'd it into a Place of Publick Worship, which is the Reason that the Disciples are said to have met in an Ὑπερῶον, or Upper-Room, *Act. i. 13.* possibly the same which Christ celebrated the *Eucharist* in, and who knows not, that mention is sometimes made of a Church in such a Man's House? as *Coloss. iv. 15.* Salute Nymphas, and the Church at his House.

OEcum. in loc.
 Μέγας ὁ ἀνὴρ, τῷ
 ᾧ οἰκίαν αὐτοῦ ἐκ-
 κλησίαν πεποίη-
 κεν.

Upon which words, *OEcumenus* tells us, He was a great Man, for he had converted his House into a Church. And though it is said, *Act. ii. 46.* That the Believers continuing Daily with one Accord in the Temple, and Breaking of Bread from House to House, did eat their Meat with Gladness of Heart; yet the Phrase κατ' οἶκον, which we render from House to House, as our Translators take Notice in the Margin, may as well be render'd in the House; and the Meaning will be this, That continuing Daily in the Temple, or Frequenting the Temple daily, they broke Bread in the House, i. e. in the House by the Temple, appropriated to the Publick Christian Worship, and particularly in that Upper-Room by the Temple, where the Apostles and Believers

lievers used to meet; in which place, when they had broken Bread, or received the *Eucharist*, they went Home to their own Houses, and sat down to their private Meals with Joy, and great Comfort.

II. The succeeding Churches observ'd this very religiously, and therefore call'd the Holy Communion *Συνάξις*, or a *Convocation*, because they judg'd it meet, the whole Church should be together when it was administred: For this Reason it was also call'd *Λειτουργία*, *Liturgy*, which properly imports *Publick Administration of an Office*, and therefore applyed, *Rom. xv. 27.* to Publick Distribution of Alms, to the Magistrate's Executing of his Office, *Rom. xiii. 4.* and to the Office of Teaching and Prophefying in the Publick Congregation, *Act. xiii. 2.* And this gave Occasion to *Cyril of Alexandria* to say, in an Epistle to *Cælosyrius*, That the *Eucharist*, or *Sacred Symbols*, ought to be offer'd no where, but in the Churches of Believers; and that he, who attempts the Contrary, doth manifestly violate the Law of God, meaning the Apostles Practice before mention'd, which, he supposes, amounts to a virtual Command. To this Purpose, the Council of *Laodicea* forbid all Bishops and Priests to celebrate the Communion in private Houses, and *Eustathius* the Bishop of *Sebastia*, as *Socrates* tells us, among other Reasons, was depos'd from his Place and Dignity for this, because he had given Permission to have the Lord's Supper administred in private Houses, which was, saith the *Historian*, against the Ecclesiastical Rules: Notwithstanding this, it was customary at *Rome* to do so, which makes *St. Hierome*, in his Book against *Jovinian*, find Fault with the Abuse, and expostulate with them, *Why do not they go to Church to receive Christ's Body and Blood? Are there two Christs? One in Publick, another in Private?* And indeed, those Christians that insisted upon this Publick Administration, had the *Jewish Church* for their Pattern; for it being

*Soc. Lib. 2.
Cap. 33.*

being taken for granted, that the *Lord's Supper* was succedaneous to the *Passover*, as the *Paschal Lamb* was to be kill'd in the Temple, and in Publick; so it was fit, that the solemn Remembrance of the Death of that Lamb, which was to take away the Sins of the World, the *Antitype* of the other, should be celebrated in Publick, and in the Congregations of Christians. That the *Paschal Lamb*, which every Family among the *Jews* were oblig'd to eat of, was kill'd in the Temple, is more than probable; for tho' *Philo* the *Jew* seems to take it for granted, that every Master of a Family had Liberty to kill the *Paschal Lamb* at his own House; yet, as judicious Men have observ'd, *Philo* being an *Alexandrian*, and not having those Opportunities of searching into the *Jewish* Rites that others had, who liv'd at *Jerusalem*, might easily run into a Mistake; the rather, because *Josephus*, and most *Jews* affirm the contrary, viz. That every Master of a Family was oblig'd to bring the Lamb intended to be eaten at the Celebration of the *Passover*, to the Temple, to the Priests, who were to kill it for him. If it had not been so, it is not easy to imagine, how the Priests could have given so exact an Account to *Cestius* of the Number of the *Jews* that were come up to the *Passover* at that Time, for they gave in an Account of 55000 and 600 Persons, that had presented themselves at the Feast, which in all Likelihood they knew by the Lambs the People brought to them to be slain for their respective Families; and though *Jewish* Customs lay no Obligations upon Christians, yet where the Gospel gives a Rule, a *Jewish* Practice, in a Case not much unlike, may serve for Confirmation of the Observance.

III. The Publick Eating of the *Lord's Supper*, doth certainly best represent the End for which Christ died; and that is the Publick Good; a Good, which *Caiaphas* ignorantly acknowledged and confessed, when he told the *Jews*, *Ye know nothing at all, nor consider, that it is expedient*

expedient for us, that one Man should die for the People, and that the whole Multitude perish not, Joh. xi. 49, 50. But St. John is fuller in the Explication of this Good, when he asserts, that his Death is a *Propitiation for our Sins, and not for ours only, but for the Sins of the whole World*, 1 Joh. ii. 2. Many Things are by Men pretended to be done for the Publick Good; but what they call *Publick*, is either for the Good of a Family, or Corporation, or Parish, or City, or a certain Territory, or a Kingdom: But the Death of Christ spreads its Vertues infinitely wider, not confining its Benefits to a Province, or a Part of the World, but the whole Race of Mankind was concern'd in the Favour; so that nothing was ever done so truly for the Publick Good, as Christ's Suffering and Dying; and whoever remembers it in Publick, testifies his Esteem and Value of it, not only by his inward Sense and Admiration of it, but by the very Place, in which he doth remember it. The Truth is, Christ was crucified publicly in the Face of the Sun, and before huge Multitudes, both of *Jews* and *Proselytes*, who were come to give their Attendance at the Passover: Both *Jews* and *Gentiles* beheld the Spectacle, and Men of all Sorts and Conditions crowded to see so dreadful a Show, which was an *Item*, that the Remembrance of it should be in the most Publick Place, *the Church*; the rather, because this Publick Remembrance doth best promote Christ's Glory, as Multitudes joining together in Confessions and Praises, must necessarily advance it more than the *Hallelujahs* of Two or Three in Private.

IV. Private Communions, or Communions in Places which were neither Churches nor Publick Oratories, owe their first Rise to the Church's Persecutions: For when *Nero* and his Successors in the *Roman Empire*, began to defile the Faith with Blood, and to be a Christian and a Malefactor, were made convertible
Terms,

Terms, the Christians were forc'd to serve God as they could, and therefore celebrated the Communion in any Place, to which they were driven in the common Storm, in Mines, in Ships, in Stables, in Prisons, in Caves and Dens of the Earth, and where two or three Christians had the Convenience of getting a Bishop or Minister to consecrate the Elements, they chearfully remember'd their crucified Lord and Ma-

ster, as *Dyonisius of Alexandria* tells us
Euseb. Hist. in *Eusebius*. And this soon occasion'd
Eccles. Lib. 7. another Custom, which was, to send
Cap. 21. part of the consecrated Bread and Wine

to Peoples Houses and Cottages in the Country; *Justin Martyr* is very express in this Point. And hence it came to pass, that the Christians kept the consecrated Elements by them, to make use of them when either Sicknefs seiz'd them, or they found Death approaching; and upon this Account the Sacrament was call'd the *Viaticum*, or Provision for a Man's

Journey into another World, as we
Gregor. Lib. learn from *Gregory the Great*. And be-
7. Epist. 62. cause the Holy Bread thus kept for Use, was sometimes too big for the sick, or dying Person to swallow, they crumbled the Bread into the consecrated Wine, and gave it the sick Person in a Spoon,

as we see in the Example of *Serapian* in
Lib. 6. Cap. 23. *Eusebius*, a Thing which in process of Time was thought so necessary for all dying Christians, that in some Places, where Superstition thrust out true Devotion, in case a Person dy'd before he had receiv'd the Communion, they would thrust, and force the Crumbs of Bread, mingled with Holy Wine, into the Mouths of Persons already departed, against which Profanation the Fathers thought themselves obliged to enact very severe Canons, which was done accordingly in the Councils of *Carthage*, *Antisiodorum*, and *Constantinople*; and *Julius*, Bishop of *Rome*, forbade putting the Crums of consecrated Bread in Wine; a Practice, which in all probability came first from sending

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ing the consecrated Elements to Persons absent from the Publick, who either could not, or durst not appear in the publick Oratories; a Thing that *Origen* either foresaw, or knew would be abus'd, which makes him inveigh against such Presumption: So that as Persecution first brought in private Communion, so when those Persecutions ceased, the Church still obliged her Members to receive the Communion in Publick, according to the first Institution. It is therefore wisely ordered by our Church, that People shall be exhorted in time of their Health, to receive the *Eucharist* in Publick, that they may not be disquieted for the Omission of it, when Diseases or Distempers do suddenly seize upon them; at which times, as the Senses and Faculties are weak, so Men cannot receive these Mysteries with that Vigor, Zeal, and Love, that is required in the right Use of the Ordinance. And indeed, where People neglect Receiving in Publick, not thinking of their Duty till Death put them in mind of it, we can promise them but little Comfort. He that hath often appeared at the Lord's Table in Publick, and concludes the Scene of his Life with this Remembrance, may reap more than ordinary Satisfaction from it, because he perfects that in Private, which he so often comfortably made use of in Publick; but he whose Eyes were never open to see the Necessity of it, till his dying Groans remove his Blindness, as he hath despised the Church of God, and neglected the Time of his Visitation, so his Comforts can neither be so great, nor so solid as his, who hath frequently strengthen'd his Soul in Publick with this Cordial: When the Powers of the Soul are shaken with a violent Sicknes, and the Limbs are weak, the Spirits faint, and the Thoughts diverted by Uneasiness and Pain, alas! How can the Soul fix on the Cross of Christ? What Sense, what Touches of his Love can it have, or what Guesses can it make as to its spiritual Growth and Advancement in Holiness? And though, according to the old Proverb, *It's better*

late

late than never, yet it's to be fear'd, such Men come so very late, that if they were to be pictur'd, they might justly be drawn, as the Cardinal drew *Solomon*, hanging betwixt Heaven and Hell, it being very doubtful, which of these Two would fall to their Share. So that upon a Review of the Whole, though private Communions cannot be said to be altogether unlawful, especially in Times of Persecution, nor inconvenient to Persons, who have frequently attended this Ordinance in Publick, when they were able, so in Times of Peace, and Liberty, and Tranquillity, for Men and Women to continue Strangers to publick Receiving, and to satisfy themselves with a private Communion upon a Death-bed, is a Thing so inexcusable, that we cannot but with all possible Earnestness discourage it, as a Thing that's a Dishonour to the Church they live in, a Disgrace to the Religion they profess, an Impediment to their Comfort, a *Remora* to their Joy, an Affront to their Saviour, and an uncertain Cherisher of their Hopes of Salvation.

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*The Preceding Considerations reduc'd to Practice.*

**W**HAT a Mercy is it, that we have Publick Churches and Oratories to go to, without Lett or Hindrance; that we have no Tyrants, nor Foreign Enemies, no Rods, no Axes, no Noise of War, no Armies of Aliens to fright us from the Publick Ordinances; that we can meet, and remember our *Crucified Master*, without Fear, without Disturbance, without Danger; and that, instead of being discountenanc'd in the Service, we have all the Encouragement that Authority can give; and our Magistrates are *Nursing-Fathers*, which not only allow of our Frequenting the House of God, but also compel us to come in. How did the Excellent *David* bemoan himself, when through the Malice of *Saul*,  
his



his Antagonist, he was forc'd away from the Publick Offices of the Church? How much happier did he think *Swallows* and *Sparrows* to be, than himself, which had Liberty to build their Nests about the Roof of the Temple, and there to lay their Young? *Psal.* lxxxiv. 1, 2, 3. while he must be content with Wishes and Breathings after the Courts of the Lord, and Strangers cast it in his Teeth so often, *Where is now thy God?* *Psal.* xlii. 2, 3. We, that have all the external Advantages of Religion, and are even cloy'd with the Plenty of Spiritual Provision, cannot imagine the lamentable Condition, that persecuted Christians are in, who are forc'd to serve the Lord with Fear, and to attend his Ordinances with Trembling; who are not permitted to sing the Songs of *Zion* in a strange Land, and therefore must hang their Harps upon the Willows, sit weeping by the Rivers of *Babylon*, and hear the Enemy roar in the midst of the Congregations of the Lord: Yet, if the Liberty we enjoy, makes us wanton, and the Plenty God gives us, tempts us to Licentiousness; if instead of growing better, it makes us worse; and the Glory of our Temple proves an Occasion of Dishonouring that God, who dwells in them; if our going up to Mount *Zion*, makes us proud, and the Means of Grace, whereof we have such Store, are improv'd into Quarrels and Dissensions; if instead of glorifying God for this Affluence, we fall out among ourselves, and instead of letting our Light shine before Men, espouse the Works of Darknes; if instead of being obedient to the Faith, we disgrace it by our Infidelity, and instead of the Power of Godliness, content ourselves with the Form of it; if the *Manna* we have, doth not make us hunger and thirst after Righteousness; and the great Truths God hath vouchsafed us, do not make our Lives Great and Exemplary; we have reason to fear God will remove our Candlesticks from us, and send a Famine of the Word; God did so to *Jerusalem*, and did so to the *Eastern Churches*, and we being like them, may justly expect the same Judgments.

II. The Church is the House of God, *Keep therefore thy Foot, when thou goest to the House of God, Eccles. v. 1.* As Men that walk in Danger, look to their Steps, and take Care where they set their Foot, so he that enters into the House of Prayer, had need enter with great Cautiousness and Watchfulness, for he comes before a God who sees his Thoughts, takes Notice of his Designs, and knows the secret Recesses of his Soul; observes his Looks, and Postures, and Behaviour, and will at last call him to an Account for his Carelessness and Irreverence. Were these Things seriously thought of, How could the Generality of us come into this House with no greater Awe, and with as loose Affections, as if they were going to a Play? How durst we stare about in Prayer? How could we let our Thoughts rove and wander, while we seem to be engaged in Devotion? How could we hear with that Indifferency? How could we apply ourselves to the Duties required of us, with that Coldness, which is so visible in most Congregations? How could we turn our Services into meer Formalities, and stand before the Great God unconcern'd, and return from his House without a Relish of the Mysteries of Godliness? To see what Decency and Gravity Men observe in the Presence of a Prince, and to think, how little Regard we have to the Presence of a Glorious God, in the House which he is pleased to call his *Tabernacle* and *Dwelling-Place*, is enough to make the Holy Angels conclude, that in the midst of his Temple we are Infidels; to see how supinely some sit at their Prayers, as if they were praying to a Stock or Stone; to see how others compose themselves to sleep, as if the God they come to worship, with *Baal*, were asleep too, and they come to honour him with that Posture; to see how some come to shew their Bravery here, and to be seen and taken Notice of, and to be admired by Spectators; to see how others strive for Places of Superiority, and the chief Seats in these Synagogues, and there vent their Pride, their Anger,

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and their Malice, where they ought to express their greatest Humility and Charity; to see how others talk here of their worldly Concerns; or, if they do not talk of them, act and behave themselves as if they thought of Nothing else, where they are to mind only the great Concerns of their immortal Souls; to see all this, What can we infer, but that Men have no Sense of the Tremendous Majesty on High? No Sense of the Mysteries the very Angels desire to look into? These Things, *My Brethren*, ought not so to be: When therefore thou goest to the Temple of the Lord, remember the Magnificence of that God, at whose Footstool thou goest to worship: When thou enterest in at the Door of this House, leave there thy worldly Thoughts and carnal Desires, and come filled with the Spirit into the Tabernacle of the Lord: Sit, and stand, and kneel there, as before the Searcher of all Hearts; resolve to come away from thence edified, and with greater Store of Spiritual Blessings than thou hadst before. In Praying, fix thy Thoughts upon Him who heareth Prayer; and if thou dost, thou canst not but appear in such a Posture, as doth best express thy inward Sense of his Greatness and Holiness. In Hearing, apply the general Admonitions, and Exhortations, and Reproofs to thine own Soul. In Reading, make some Spiritual Reflexion on the Examples, Precepts, Promises, that are before thee. In Singing, mind the Matter more than the Tune, and let thy Heart bear part in the Exercise. In Receiving the Supper of the Lord, let not the Outward humble Posture be all the Service thou performest, but fix the Eyes of thy Understanding upon the Cross, and there contemplate the Mercy that flows from it, and from thence take Fire and Courage to abound in Love to God and Man. At thy Going in, beg of God to prepare thy Heart: At thy Coming out, beg that thou may'st not lose the Things that have been wrought in thee: And this is *to keep thy Foot, when thou goest into the House of God.*



*The P R A Y E R.*

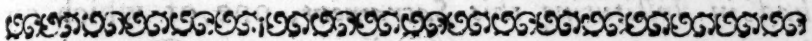
**O** Thou, in whose Temple every Man speaks of Thine Honour, whose Glory no mortal Man can sufficiently express, whose Goodness no Tongue is able to display, whose Holiness transcends all the Perfections we see here below! Over-awe my Spirit, when I go with the Multitude to the House of God, with the Voice of Joy and Praise: O let me consider, it is the All-seeing God, in whose Presence I stand, and that the Holy Angels are sent to observe my Devotion. Give me sober Thoughts, holy Affections, devout Postures, Steadiness of Mind, ardent Desires, modest Looks, a grave Behaviour, especially when I am going to contemplate the precious Sacrifice, offered by the Son of God for the Sins of the World; let all that is within me turn into Holy Breathings; represent that comfortable Object in lively Characters to my Understanding, that I may think Nothing unworthy of my Saviour; banish from me all indecent Thoughts, or if thou dost not think fit to free me from Temptations, encourage me however, to resist them vigorously, that I may discover my Zeal for Thy Glory, by my Abhorrency of all Imaginations, that exalt themselves against the Obedience of Christ Jesus. *Amen.*





## CHAP. IV.

Of Eating the Lord's Supper. The Nature of it, and how it is to be Eaten.



### The CONTENTS.

*A great Difference betwixt Coming to the Lord's Supper, and Eating the Lord's Supper. Several Reasons, why Men come, though they do not Eat as they ought to do. What Eating the Lord's Supper is, viz. To Eat it with a Relish of the Benefits of Christ's Death, with Longings to be conformable to Christ in his Graces, and to Eat it with unfeigned Resolutions to resist Temptations. Much depends upon the Manner of any Religious Performance. Conversation with God, with ourselves, and with the Holy Angels, a great Means to Eat, as we ought to Eat. The Prayer.*

I. **T**HAT there are many who come to the Lord's Supper, and yet Eat not the Lord's Supper as they ought to do, is evident from Experience, and will appear more fully in the Sequel of this Discourse, when we shall tell you what it is to Eat and Drink unworthily. When some of the looser Sort of the *Corinthian* Christians, *1 Cor. xi. 20.* came drunk to this Sacrament, it's certain, they only eat *the Bread of the Lord*, but not *the Bread, the Lord*, as the Fathers spake; and if *Simon Magus*, *Act. viii. 13.* came to this Feast, as I am apt to believe he did, for in those Days, they that were baptized were soon after admitted to the Lord's Supper, as appears from *Act. ii. 41, 42.* this must necessarily have been his Case; and who can doubt of this Truth, that in the Age we live in, sees so many come to this Royal Supper, and

go away unreform'd, untouch'd, and unconcern'd ? than which, there cannot be a greater Sign that they do not eat the Supper of the Lord, though they approach, and feed upon the external Elements : And Men may very easily know it by such Marks as these.

1. *If they come without any Sense of the Designs Christ had in Instituting this Sacrament*, one of which certainly was to engage us to the generous *Contempt of the World*, in Imitation of him ; who for the Glory set before him, not only undervalu'd the Pomp and Grandeur of the World, but *endur'd the Cross*, and *despis'd the Shame*, as we are told, *Heb. xii. 2.* And when we see Men and Women approach the Table of the Lord, with all the Gaudies and Gaieties their vain Desires prompt them to, like *Ranters*, rather than *Penitents* ; more like soft *Sybarites*, than frightened *Disciples* ; dress'd to allure Mens Eyes, more than to invite the *Crucified Jesus* into their Souls ; like Players, rather than like *Christians* : And when we see, how the very next Day after this Feast, if they stay so long, they quarrel, fight, contend, and fall out about the Trifles of the World ; run to Theaters and Play-houses, and with as great Greediness as ever, pursue the Riches, and Glories, and Fashions of the World ; How can we imagine, that such Persons came with the Sense of the fore-mention'd Design of Christ, in Instituting this Sacred Feast ?

2. *If they come without any Sense of the Love of God.* Of which there is so curious a Picture drawn in this Sacrament, as is enough to make even the most hard-hearted *Heathen* weep : And what Sense of this Love can we suppose to have been in Men, when after their Receiving, they do not so much as look into a Bible, to see what Precepts and Commands of *Christ*, they mean for the Future to be more observant of ? Is it possible such Men had any Sense of the Love of God upon their Spirits, that Day they received the Holy Elements, when the next Day they offend him as boldly as  
ever,



ever, and hug the same Sins they entertain'd several Years before, and are now as little concern'd to please God, as they were some Months ago? and consequently such Persons come to the *Lord's Supper*, yet do not eat as they ought to do; for none eat it truly, but such as eat with this Sense; and where this Sense is, it will make the Soul cautious of offending God,

II. Yet such Guests are very common at this Table, which would make a wise Man wonder, why they will come at all, when their Coming signifies so little, and, as will appear afterward, doth them more Harm than Good. Yet the Reasons may easily be guess'd at: For,

1. *Conviction brings them to it.* They are convinc'd, that Coming is a commanded Duty, not a Thing indifferent, and that they may not seem Despisers and Contemnners of so great a Law, they come, tho' they put strange Fire in their Censers; Conviction hath great Power, even upon unregenerate Men: It made *Felix* tremble, *Act.* xxiv. 25. and *Judas* throw down the thirty Pieces of Silver, the Reward of his Treason in the Temple, *Matth.* xxvii. 4. and *Simon* embrace Christian Baptism, *Act.* viii. 13. And where a Man's teaz'd and haunted by his Conscience, he'll do something to stop its Mouth; and though he doth it but slovenly, yet he'll bribe Conscience with this Trifle, as we do Children, that cry for a Jewel, with a Rattle; and in this manner Conviction works upon some Men and Women, and that Force puts several upon coming to the Lord's Table.

2. *Their Office and Employment* obliges them to receive, and that makes not a few appear at this Table. The Law of the Land excluding Men from Publick Offices and Charges, that receive not the Communion; we may very justly believe, that abundance come to satisfy the Statute, more than their Conscience, and Fear of Losing or Missing of the Office they are ambitious of, hath a stronger Influence upon

upon them, than the Fear of Losing God's Favour; not but that a Man may Eat the Lord's Supper to his great Comfort and Edification, because an *Act of Parliament* commands it, at his Entrance upon an Office; for a Man who fears God, may make use of any Occasion to receive, and consequently may make his present Office an Opportunity of Coming to the Sacrament: But I speak my just Fears, that many receive on this Account, whom neither Love to God nor to their own Souls, could have obliged to come, had it not been for such forcible Means, or Streights and Necessities; so that the Minister of the Ordinance may thank their Office more than their Religion, that he sees them in that Holy Place; and most certainly, this is not Eating the Lord's Supper; for Nothing is properly an Act of Religion, but what is a Free-will Offering, and flows from an internal Love of the Duty. And what is here said of accidental Employments, is too true of Standing-Offices of the Church. A Minister, or Clergyman, may come to the Lord's Supper, and yet not eat the Lord's Supper; he may celebrate it as a Minister, and yet not eat it as a sincere Christian; he may eat it, because his Office obliges him to administer it, and yet not eat with that Sense which becomes a sincere Believer: And it is so with lesser Officers about a Church; Custom may carry them a great Way, and for some Years they may never fail to come to this Table, and yet may not eat as they ought; for they may do it upon the Account of their Office only, and because it is expected of them; but the Sense of the End, and of the Love of God, may be wanting, which Defect makes it a very lame Offering.

3. Such Men however come, and to this they are led by a Fancy they are willing to entertain, that other Men, who come, receive it with no greater Sense or Seriousness than they. They consider not, whether this will be a good Plea another Day; but it gives present Satisfaction, and this makes them espouse it.

it. Not to mention, that it is great Rashness and Presumption in them, to judge of other Mens Hearts, the Secrets of which they are for the most part ignorant of; and if other Men should be no better than they, yet that would be no Excuse, Men being to live by Precepts, not by every Example that is before them; yet thus Men love to delude themselves, and by that Means precipitate themselves into unspeakable Dangers: For,

III. This not Eating as they ought, strangely hardens them in Sin. If the Cross of Christ cannot open their Eyes, or make them sensible of their Errors, few Things can be supposed able to do it to their Comfort. If the Blood of the Covenant cannot supple their Hearts, other Things must be believed to be ineffectual, because God looks upon this as the most Potent Remedy to effect it; nor is this to be understood only of scandalous Sins, but all such Offences which Christ hath peremptorily forbid, tho' the World takes no great Notice of them, such as are Aversion from Holy Thoughts and Discourses, and Neglect of those Gospel-Graces the Apostle presses upon such as would not be Christians in vain. And hence it is, that where Men do not eat the Lord's Supper aright, our Exhortations to those nobler Duties of Religion are lost upon them, and all the severe Threatnings we rehearse and mention, to rouse them from their Spiritual Slumber, are spoke to the Wind, and they continue Strangers to that Spiritual Frame, which the Apostle calls, *Rom. viii. 5. Minding the Things of the Spirit.* By a Spiritual Frame of the Heart, I mean a God-like Temper, which is pleased with any Thing that makes for the Glory of God; and, as Fire, converts all Things into its own Substance, spiritualizeth Objects, or makes a Spiritual Use of them, and is truly enamour'd with the severer Precepts of the Gospel, and looks upon them as Perfective of our Natures, and consequently thinks



no Commandment grievous. Hence it is, that such Men, who are Strangers to this Frame, their Religion turns into meer Formality and Hypocrisy; and however it may look in their own Eyes, in the Sight of God it goes for no more than Paint and Varnish, meer Glow-worm Light that shines, but warms not; glitters, but gives no Heat; blazes, but doth not touch the Heart; and, like rotten Wood, seems bright, but hath nothing of Fire in it; and this must necessarily cause very false Applications of Gospel-Promises; which at last produces such Self-Deceptions, that when they come to appear before the Bar of God's Justice, they'll not only wonder at the Cheats they have put upon themselves, but tear their Hair, and smite their Breasts, and be ready to kill themselves, to think how they have murder'd their own Souls with Kindness, and by fair Words and Speeches enticed them into Ruin.

IV. From what we have said, it will easily appear, what Eating of the Lord's Supper doth import; Eating it, I mean, in a Scripture Sense.

I. To eat it with a Relish of the Benefits of Christ's Death and Passion; even in our Common Meals we find a great Difference betwixt Eating and Relishing, betwixt Eating with, and without an Appetite, betwixt Tasting the Juice and Delicacy of the Meat, and Fancying it to be no better than Chalk or Ashes: He that eats the Lord's Supper aright, his Soul must eat as well as his outward Organs; and as Christ saith, *Joh. vi. 63. The Words that I speak unto you, they are Spirit, and they are Life;* so the Soul that eats, as it should do, the Benefits of Christ's Death, they must be Life and Spirit to her, a perfect Cordial, true Elixir, real Sweetness, comfortable Balm, and sweeter than Honey to the Palate. These Benefits are Pardon and Peace, and Reconciliation to God and Salvation, and the Soul must be affected with them, prize them, value them practically above the Riches of the World,  
and

and count all Things Dross and Dung, for the Excellency of them; and be willing to part rather with Father and Mother, and Lands and Houses, than with the Comforts of them; and that is to relish, and then the Soul eats indeed; whereas a Person that either thinks not of these Benefits, or, if he thinks of them, hath no actual Value for them, so as to feel in himself how highly he esteems them, and what a mighty Veneration he hath for them, though he may be said to eat, yet he doth not relish them, and therefore doth not eat aright.

2. It is to eat with secret Longings, to be conformable to Christ Jesus in His Humility and Charity, or, as the Apostle expresses it, to have the *same Mind in us, which was also in Christ Jesus*, Phil. ii. 5. And this in another Place is called *Hungring and Thirsting after Righteousness*, Matth. v. 6. and was represented of Old by the secret Longings of the Spouse, *Cant. i. 3. Draw me after Thee, and I will run.* Where there is no such Longing to conform to Christ in these Vertues, a Man doth not properly eat the Lord's Supper like a healthy Man, for he digests not, the Food doth not turn into good Juice, it doth not nourish him, he doth not thrive upon it. I call it Longing; for the Desire after these Graces, which were so Eminent in Christ, must be strong and vehement, ardent, and grounded upon the Beauty, Loveliness, and Amiability of them; such a Longing as David expressed for the Lord's House, and His Word: *As the Hart panteth after the Water Brooks, so panteth my Soul after Thee, O God*, Psal. xlii. 1. *How amiable are Thy Tabernacles, O Lord of Hosts! My Soul longeth, yea even fainteth for the Courts of the Lord*, Psal. lxxxiv. 1, 2. *My Soul breaketh for the Longing that it hath unto Thy Righteous Judgments at all Times.* And though I grant something of an Hyperbole in these Phrases, yet still they import that his Desires were strong, hearty, and vehement; and such must be the Desires of the Soul in Eating the Lord's Supper, to be conformable to Her Lord and Master.

3. It is to eat with unfeigned Resolutions to resist all known Temptations to those particular Sins we are most prone and inclined to; this shews that we eat with an Intent to grow Strong, and that this is a true *Sacrament* to us, a *Vow*, whereby we tie ourselves to be faithful to our General, and to fight against his Enemies. Many a Man that comes to the Lord's Supper, feels some faint Resolutions against Sin in general, but that works upon him no more than Sparks of Fire serve to warm a frozen Man; and therefore it's necessary, that in Eating, a Christian should feel invincible Resolutions to subdue those particular Sins he is most apt to fall, or rush into, and to which his Calling, Employment, Converse, and Figure in the World doth most sollicit and tempt him; else he beats the Air, and fights with Shadows; and if he doth not single out those Enemies that are most apt to do him Mischief, Resolution to fight against the Powers of Darkness in general, gives these unregarded Sins that do him most hurt, Opportunity to live secure, and to keep Possession of what they have already got into their Clutches.



*The Preceding Considerations reduc'd to Practice.*

I. **T**H E Manner of any Religious Performances make it either Pleasing or Displeasing to God: This turns the Scales; and two Acts of Piety which seem to be the same, many times are not, because the Manner of the Performance makes a vast Difference in the Value. The Examples of the *Publican* and the *Pharisee* praying in the Temple, and *Abel's* and *Cain's* offering Sacrifices, are notorious Instances of this Truth. *David* pays his Vows, *Psal.* lxxvi. 13. So doth the Harlot mention'd in *Prov.* vii. 14. The former is *Precious* in the Sight of God, the latter *Odious*; the Reason is, the former proceeded from a Sense of Gratitude, and a Relish of the Sweetness of God's Service; the



the other from a base Design to compensate God for the Sins the strange Woman lived and delighted in. It is so in Eating the *Lord's Supper*, and as St. Paul saith of the Jews, *They are not all Israel which are of Israel, neither because they are Seed of Abraham are they all Children*, Rom. ix. 6, 7. so all that seem to eat of the *Lord's Supper*, do not therefore eat to the same Purpose; some eat as *Enemies*, others as *Children*; some as *Strangers*, others as *Domesticks*; some as *Slaves*, others as *Heirs* of the Promise. Look to the manner of thy Eating, *Christian*. Eat like a Person that is sensible he sits down at the Table of the greatest Prince, the Prince himself being present. Eat like a Person sensible, that the King, in whose Presence thou art, is thy best and greatest Friend: Eat like a Person sensible that thou hast deserved to sup with Devils, to feed on Flames, and to drink the Dregs of the Cup of God's Anger. Eat like a Person sensible, that from the Condition of a miserable Slave, thou art advanced to the Dignity of a Child and Son of God. Eat like a Person sensible, that no Merit, no Desert of thine, nothing but the incomprehensible Goodness of God hath brought thee to this Honour and Prerogative, and it's impossible thou canst eat amiss; for this Sense will oblige thee to eat with Joy and Trembling, which is the most proper Devotion for a Creature to express in the Presence of his Creator.

II. Conversation is a great Means to do Things as we ought. He that converses with Men of his own Trade, will learn how to manage it to his Advantage. He that converses with great Persons, learns how to please them. He that converses with ingenious Workmen, learns to do Things to his and others Satisfaction. The same Rule is to be observ'd in Eating the *Lord's Supper*, and he cannot but eat it to God's liking, and his own Comfort, that before he eats, converses with himself, and while he is Eating, converses with God, and after he has eaten, converses with the Holy Angels.

1. Conversing

1. Converſing with ourſelves before we eat, conſiſts in asking our Hearts, *What have I done? What Sins are thoſe that I am apt to lodge in my Boſom? What evil Deſires am I ready to entertain? What Diſorders, what Corruptions find Countenance or Approbation in my Soul? Is it Revenge? Is it rendring Railing for Railing? Is it frothy Diſcourſes? Is it vain Romantick Imaginations? Is it Wearineſs of God's Service? Is it Backwardneſs to Holy Duties? Is it Unwillingneſs to know the Will of God? Is it Diſcontent in the Condition I am in? Is it Intemperance in Eating and Drinking? Is it a Deſire of Vain-Glory? Is it ſudden Anger? Is it Impatience, or Worldly Sorrow? Is it Grief and Vexation, that I cannot have my Will in ſuch Outward Things, as my Appetite deſires? Is it Love and Affection to the Vanities of this World? What dangerous Guests are theſe? and ſhall I entertain them? What are theſe but Enemies to the Croſs? and ſhall I make much of them? or let them go out and in without Controul? Either theſe Corruptions muſt be gone, or my Saviour will not ſtay with me. Shall I, with the Jews, reſuſe my Great Redeemer's Company, and deſire a Barabbas? I am now going to the Croſs of Chriſt, and ſhall I approach with theſe Enſigns of Rebellion in my Soul? Will Chriſt vouchſafe a favourable Look to me, where he ſees ſuch Satyrs dance? I am going to Mount Calvary, and ſhall theſe monſtrous Rags be my Attendance? No, no, I will not loſe Heaven for this; I will ſet my Face againſt theſe Foes; I will let them ſee, that there is ſomething dearer to me than their Preſence, or Company, even He, who laid down his Life for me. Theſe Bryers and Thorns ſhall not ſtop my Way. Away, ye Evil Spirits, you have haunted me long enough; I'll be afraid of you no longer; I'll take Courage, and fight againſt you, for God is on my Side; Why ſhould I fear in the Day of Trouble?*

2. Converſing with God, when we eat, imports Contemplating what God hath done for us in Chriſt Jeſus; how God was in Chriſt reconciling the World to Himſelf, not imputing their Treaſpaſſes unto them; for in this Contemplation the Soul addreſſes herſelf

to God, O my God, what Cost and Charges hast thou been at, to redeem such a Wretch as I am! How hast thou bow'd the Heavens! Lord, thou didst make thyself a Curse for me, that I might be advanced to bliss! I see what a costly Thing my Salvation is, since to purchase it, the Son of God did die! Yet how light do I make of Heaven! O God, what moved thee to love me thus? And shall I think any Thing too dear to part with for thy Sake? Into what Labyrinths do I run myself, while I am mine own Keeper! Thou hast paid dear for thy Right to rule and govern me! And shall I, after all, be loth to be govern'd by so Gracious a Master? Here I make an Offering of my Heart, if thou wilt but vouchsafe to accept of it; it is a Present unworthy of thy Greatness and Majesty, yet thou art pleased to require no other Sacrifice: Henceforward speak, Lord, and thy Servant will hear; and when the Characters of thy Mercy wear out, or decay in my unconstant Soul, Lord! write them there afresh; write them with the Blood of Christ, that they may be everlasting, and may be an eternal Fence to me against the Suggestions and Persuasions of thine Enemies.

3. Conversing with the Holy Angels, after we have eaten, requires Imitation of them in their Praises and Obedience. Bless the Lord, ye his Angels, that excell in Strength, that do his Commandments, hearken to the Voice of his Word, saith the Psalmist, *Psal. ciii. 20.* Praise and Obedience are inseparable Vertues, the one without the other makes dull Musick in the Ears of God. Let no Man think, that because Angels are invisible Spirits, and afar off, there is no Conversing with them: He that doth their Work, is their Companion, their Brother, and their Familiar; with such they love to be, such Persons they love to visit; and he that doth so, may be as confident they are on his Right-hand, as if he saw them, for God hath said so, *Psal. xxxiv. 7.* and therefore it must be true, whether our carnal Eyes behold them or no. Praising is not only to offer up a Psalm or Hymn, after we have eaten, but Living in a Sense of the Love of God, and he that doth so,



so, cannot but be obedient and faithful to him, that hath so signally manifested his Mercy in his Misery.

*The P R A Y E R.*

**O** Thou who art the Bread of Life, who canst feed Souls, and nourish Spirits into Immortal Life; who hast Food the World knows not of, and by Secret Influences canst enrich and enlighten those that wait at the Pool, for the Stirring of the Waters; O bring my Mind in Frame! O teach me to eat in this *Sacrament of thy Love*, to the satisfying of my Soul! Make the Food of Sin odious and bitter to me. I have fed too long on that stoln Bread. Open my Eyes, that I may see how miserable I am, if I do not relish what Thou hast set before me. Thou hast given me a Soul, and Thou would'st have it thrive. In this Sacrament is that which shall strengthen my Heart. I want only a mighty Hunger and Thirst, O Thou, who hast given me an Appetite after the Meat which perishes, give me a Holy Greediness after that which endures to everlasting Life! O let the Benefits of Thy Death, prove Life to my Spirit. Raise it up above this dull and corruptible Flesh, that it may triumph over its base Desires. Bring Thou back my Captivity, and let my Chains fall off. Let the Liberty of Thy Children, which consists in a chearful going on from Vertue to Vertue, be my Delight and Ornament; so shall the King take Pleasure in my Beauty, and my Soul shall rejoice in Thee for ever. *Amen.*



## CHAP. V.

### Of the various Abuses of this Holy Sacrament.

#### The CONTENTS.

*The most Sacred Things in all Ages have been abused. Instances drawn from the brazen Serpent, Gideon's Ephod, and the Love-Feasts of the Primitive Christians. Abuses of Holy Things rise from several Causes. The Lord's Supper hath undergone the same Fate. The holier any Thing is, that is abused, the greater is the Crime. A great Abuse of this Holy Sacrament, is to falsify, that like a Spell, it will charm Sin out of our Souls, without strong Endeavours. The Abuses committed in this Sacrament, no just Temptation to neglect the Use of it. The Prayer.*

1. **T**HERE is Nothing so Sacred or Holy, but hath been, and may still be, abused by sensual Men. *Moses*, Numb. xxi. 8. by God's special Appointment, erects a fiery Serpent, or a Serpent of *Polish'd Brass*, shining bright as Fire, a Symbol of God's Presence and Power, to heal the tormented *Israelites*, who had been stung by fiery Serpents; insomuch that if any of the Persons, thus stung, look'd upon the Figure, he actually recovered: So remarkable a History, depending upon this brazen Serpent, it was laid up for a Monument; yet in process of Time, this became an Object of Idolatry, which moved *Hezekiah* to break it in Pieces, and call it *Nehushtan*, 2 King. xviii. 4. The very same happen'd to *Gideon's Ephod*, *Judg.* viii. 27. a Thing innocently enough contrived, and, in all probability, piously intended as a standing Testimony to future Ages, what a signal Victory God had given his People over the barbarous

barous *Midianites*: Yet after his Death, when with his Life his Power and Authority over the brutish People were gone, they went a Whoring after it, i.e. fell to worship it, an Accident which proved the Ruin of *Gideon's* Family, and of Thousands besides in *Israel*. What could be more Innocent than the *Love-Feasts* in the Primitive Church? Mention is made of them, *Jude ver. 12*. They were Feasts made in the Oratories, or Places where the Primitive Christians used to assemble for the Celebration of Divine Worship, and at the Charge of such as were well to pass, or richer than the rest; to these the poorer Sort were invited, and sat down at the Table with the Rich, eat with them, and carried the Leavings or Fragments home; and this being done with great Expressions of Love, and managed with singular Meekness, Charity, and Humility, with brotherly Familiarity, and with Holy Discourses, without Excess or Intemperance, and all sanctified by Prayers and Psalms, and Reading the Holy Scriptures, the Apostles both permitted and encouraged these pious Collations; and after them, their Hearts being thus impregnated with Charity, they applied themselves to the Use and Celebration of the *Eucharist*. That which gave Occasion to these *Love-Feasts*, was either Christ's Eating the *Passover* with his Disciples immediately before the Communion, or the Custom of the *Jews*, who used to eat and drink together in some Chamber, or Building adjoining to the Temple, when they offer'd their Sacrifices, or, which is more probable, from the ancient Custom of the *Grecians*, who having brought rich Gifts, they intended for their Gods, to the Temple, converted them into Feasts of Charity, to which the Poor as well as the Rich sat down, and all eat together, no Respect of Persons being observ'd at that time; which Practice, not a few Christians, being lately crept out of the Darkeness of *Heathenism*, it's like, retain'd, changing only the Object of their Worship, and doing that to the Honour of the true God, which the *Pagans* did to their false and imaginary



imaginary Deities. Yet see the Abuse of these Feasts of Charity, 1 Cor. xi. 22. especially in the Church of Corinth, in the Days of the Apostles. For St. Paul being busy Abroad, partly in Planting, partly in Confirming Churches, the richer Sort of the Christians at Corinth began to think it below them to admit the Poor to that Familiarity, as to eat with them in these charitable Collations; and therefore, either prompted by their own Pride, or encouraged by some false Teachers, that had Mens Persons in Admiration because of Advantage, would indeed send the Meat and Drink they had prepared, to those Oratories or Places of Publick Worship; but when they came, they superciliously separated themselves from the poorer Sort, and eat, and drank by themselves, and so freely, that many of them became drunk, and in that Condition had the hellish Impudence afterwards to come to the Holy Sacrament: If they left any Thing at these Feasts, the Poor might take it, and make the best of it; if not, they were forced to go away hungry, and too often discontented. So early grew this Abuse, and though in Process of Time these Feasts were used after the *Eucharist*, and in many Places in Churchyards, at the Celebration of the Memories of Holy Martyrs, at the Dedication of Churches, and at the Funerals of Holy Men and Women; yet Nothing could keep out Intemperance, and Excess, and Disorders; for which Reason, the Church at last thought herself obliged to abolish and put them down, which was done accordingly by the Council of *Laodicea*, in the Year of our Lord 364. by the Council of *Carthage*, in the Year 419. and by the Council of *Constantinople*, in the Year 692.

II. Whence Abuses of Holy Things arise, is no hard Matter to guess: For,

1. We find them spring from an *Itch of Novelty*; Men, not contented with the plain and simple Truths God hath vouchsafed to Mankind, are strangely tickled

with new Things, which are often call'd *Refinings*, or *Improvements of Old Truths*, under which plausible Name they are easily swallow'd down. Hence rose the various Idolatries in the World, that it became as modish to invent new Gods, as it was to invent new Fashions in Cloaths and Habits. *Adam*, no doubt, deliver'd the Notion of One Eternal, Invisible God, Creator of Heaven and Earth, and the decent Worship of Him to his Posterity. This Notion being become common and stale, the succeeding Ages thought themselves obliged to invent something new, and counted it more Gay and Glorious to worship the Creator in the Creature; and seeing the Sun, and Moon, and Stars, that they were the brightest Monuments of God's Power, they easily fell into the Worship of those Luminaries, till the more brutish among the People ador'd them as Gods indeed; and this Novelty once broach'd, one God brought in another; and as Men were still fond of Novelties, so they went on, and fell a Worshipping deceased Hero's and Princes, in whom the Image of the supreme Deity resided, and who had been famous for some notable Exploits, or Benefits; and from hence they still went on, even to the Worshipping of Trees, Herbs, Plants, Beasts, Crocodiles, Fishes, and creeping Things, one Age still thinking to out-do the other in new Inventions of Objects of Worship, till it came to pass, that those were counted most Religious, that worshipp'd the greatest Number of Gods, as the *Athenians*, who had more Gods than any one City besides, of which the Apostle takes Notice, *Act. xvii. 22, 23.*

2. Another Cause of these Abuses, is, an Opinion, *That God is pleas'd more with the Externals, than the Internals of Religion*, an Opinion, which Men are very apt to slide into, because they find the internal Devotion is troublesome, and requires Intention of the Mind, and Mortification of the Affections; and the other is more easily perform'd. To this Original, the Corruptions that did over-spread the *Jewish Church*,

owe their Rise, who in Despight of all the Warnings of the Prophets to the contrary, laid the Stress of their Piety on the strict Observations of their Sabbaths, New Moons, Sacrifices, Phylacteries, and Legal Purifications. This gave *Mahomet* Occasion to corrupt Religion; for knowing what would please the sensual Inclinations of Men, he craftily drew People away from the Internal Worship and Consecration of the Souls and Affections to the Supreme Being, and taught them to place all Devotion in these five external Acts of Worship, *Saying their Prayers five Times a Day; Keeping the Month Ramasan; Giving the hundredth Part of their Incomes to Pious Uses; Washing before Prayer, and making a Pilgrimage, if possible, to Mecca:* And thus the Church of Rome, at this Day, comes to deviate from the true Religion, not only by adding new Articles of Faith to the ancient Creeds, but by turning the whole Worship of God, in a manner, into Ceremonies, and External Services, *Saying so many Ave-Maries, Visiting such a Saint's Shrine, Processions, Offering Wax-Candles to the Virgin, Praying by Beads, and undergoing Penances, &c.*

3. A third Cause of these Abuses, is, *Mistake of Fancy and Passion, for true Religion and Revelation.* From hence have come all the barbarous Attempts of Pretenders to the true Religion, against Magistrates, and a well settled Church and State: From hence have risen all those *Enthusiastical Conceits*, both in this and former Ages, whereby the Gospel itself hath been in Danger of being overthrown: From hence come those rude and undigested Notions of *Hildegard, Bridget, Katharine of Siena, Teresa, St. Francis*, and others in *Popery*, who by their Dreams and Visions have sought to establish the erroneous Doctrines of the *Roman Church*: From hence it was, that the *Messiliani* of Old pretended, and made People believe, that upon a Man's Regeneration, or being purged from Sin, the Devil and his Angels came out of his Mouth in the Shape of Swine. To say no more, in Men and Women, whose



Notions of Religion are crude and undigested, and who are made up of a strong Fancy, and strong Passions, Religion must needs run into Wild-Fire, and pervert the Simplicity of the Gospel.

4. A fourth Cause, is *suiting Religion to our own Humours, Lusts and Interest*. The *Tartars* therefore embraced the *Mahometan* Religion, and rejected the *Christian*, because the former gave greater Liberty to the Flesh. This made the *Heathens* invent to themselves *Deities*, that were Favourers of their Vices; and from hence it was, that in the Primitive Church, *Basilides*, *Carpocrates*, *Valentinus*, the *Nicolaitans*, and *Archonticks*, denied the Necessity of a Holy Life, because they lov'd to wallow, like a Swine, in the Mire; and in all probability, upon this Ground it was, that *Hymeneus* and *Philetus*, as the Apostle informs us, *2 Tim. xvii. 18.* affirm'd, and gave out, that the Resurrection was already past, because they were loth to be call'd to an Account for their evil Lives.

5. *False Teachers and turbulent Souls*, are another Cause. Discontented Men, because they cannot be Great, or Rich, or have their Will in the Church, under whose Government they live, to revenge themselves, many times will poison the Doctrine, make Profelytes, and resolve to become Great by doing Mischief, since they cannot be so by lawful Means. To such Persons we owe the Heresies of *Marcion*, of *Novatus*, of *Arius*, of the *Donatists*, and others, and it's no more than what St. Paul hath told us long ago; for, *the Time will come, when they will not endure sound Doctrine, but after their own Lusts shall heap to themselves Teachers, having itching Ears, 2 Tim. iv. 3.* And to this Purpose St. Peter, *2 Pet. ii. 1, 2, 3.* But there were false Prophets also among the People, even as there shall be false Teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable Heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift Destruction; And many shall follow their pernicious way, by reason of whom the Truth shall be evil spoken of, and through Covetousness

vetousness shall they, with feigned Words, make Merchandize of you, &c.

III. Nor hath the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper fared better than other Religious Institutions; for this, in all Ages, hath had its Share in the Abuses of foolish Men; and while they forgot to fix their Eyes upon the spiritual Nature and Design of it, have entertain'd gross and carnal Apprehensions concerning it: The *Corinthians* very early abated in their Esteem and Reverence of it, as appears from the latter Part of 1 *Cor. xi.* The *Pepuziani* and *Collyridianes* Hereticks, suffer'd their Women to administer this Holy Sacrament: The *Ebionites* used Water instead of Wine, in Imitation of the *Athenian* and Heathenish Sacrifices, which were therefore call'd *ἀσπλαγξή*, Sober and without Wine: The *Montanists*, *Cataphrygians*, and *Gnosticks*, proceeded to that tremendous Barbarity in this Sacrament, that they took a Child of a Year old, and pricked it with Pins and Needles, and drew a considerable Quantity of Blood from it, which Blood they mingled with the Meal of Flower, of which they made the Sacrament Bread. The Child, if it died after these Torments, was counted a Martyr; if it survived them, they gave it the Respect and Veneration of a Priest; and all these horrid Practices came merely from hence, because they stupidly thought, that real Blood was necessary in this Ordinance. Some other Villanies they committed, which Modesty bids me to conceal. The *Artotyrita*, another Sort of Hereticks, made Use of Bread and Cheese in this Sacrament; and to this they were led by a Fancy, that because the first Inhabitants in the World offer'd to God the First-Fruits of the Earth, and particularly the Milk of their Sheep and Kine, they were obliged to do so too. The *Messoliani* made this Sacrament an indifferent Thing, and gave out, that it neither promoted nor hinder'd Man's Salvation; an Error which the *Quakers* have taken up at this Day. Nor were they

they only profess'd Hereticks that committed these Abuses, but the Popes of *Rome*, by Degrees, brought in Abundance of needless Ceremonies, whereby this plain and Heavenly Ordinance was very much corrupted. Pope *Alexander*, about the Year of Christ 115, order'd (what was indifferent before) that Wine should be mixt with Water in this Sacrament, and that no other Bread should be used, but unleaven'd Bread; that Holy Water mingled with Salt, should be consecrated before the Eucharist, that the Communicants, after they had receiv'd, might be sprinkled with it. *Sixtus*, about the Year 125, order'd, That no Nun, or Women, should touch the Holy vessels, or the Cloth of the Communion-Table. *Hyginus*, about the Year 140, enjoyn'd, that the Sacrament of the Eucharist should ever be used, and celebrated at the Dedication of Churches. *Soter*, about the Year 163, that no Bishop or Priest should taste of any Thing, before the Communion, but abstain from all Manner of Food before they administered or received. *Urban*, about the Year 230, ordain'd, That no other Vessels should be used at the Communion, but either Golden, or Silver ones; if the Church were poor, then Pewter should be made Use of. *Felix*, about the Year 277, order'd, That the Eucharist should be celebrated no where, but in a Consecrated Place. *Sylvester*, who liv'd about the Year 324, gave Command, That the Altars on which the Sacrament was celebrated, should be of Stone. *Syricius*, about the Year 383, That no married Priest should celebrate or administer the Eucharist. *Innocent*, about the Year 410, gave Order, That the Names of those who had given Alms at the Communion, should be rehearsed and proclaimed in the Church, at the Celebration of this Mystery; and that even Infants should be brought to communicate in this Sacrament. *Zosimus*, his Successor, enjoyn'd, That the Deacons, while the Sacrament was Administring, should have their Hands cover'd with a Linnen Cloth. Thus Superstition came in by Degrees, and while the People



People were taught an external Veneration of the Sacrament, they neglected the Fruits of Repentance, which the worthy Receiving should have produced in them. There was an ancient Custom in the Christian Church, at the Communion, to rehearse the Names of Martyrs, and their glorious Actions, and the Miracles they had wrought, both alive and dead; from hence, by Degrees, crept in the unhappy Practice of Invocation of Saints and Martyrs in the Eucharist; and this being once allow'd of, the Doctrine of Purgatory beginning to spread about St. *Austin's* time, and more universally about the time of *Gregory the Great*, Men fell into an Opinion, that by the Eucharist, their Names that were gone into Purgatory, being rehears'd, their Souls might be deliver'd out of Purgatory; some thought, that even the Souls of the Damned were in some Measure reliev'd by this Unbloody Sacrifice: And Nothing is more common at this Day, in the Church of *Rome*, than for to say Masses for Souls in Purgatory; a Doctrine they prove from the Infirmities, Errors, and corrupt Opinions of some of the Fathers, but which the Scripture doth not speak the least Syllable of: Into such Abuses hath the World run, by deviating from the Simplicity of the Gospel. And that, which must be Matter of Grief and Sorrow to all good Men, is, that this Sacrament, which was intended as the *Bond of Peace*, is made the Ball of Contention, and the Engine of Division; the Motive to Hatred, and the Fire of Wrath and Animosities: For this the *Lutherans* write Invectives against the *Calvinists*, and the *Papists* against both; and that which should have united all Mens Hearts, makes them hate one another mortally; and no other Reason can be assigned for it, but Mens Pride and Passion, and their other Vices. Who doth not tremble, that reads the History of the *Gun-Powder-Treason*, in which the Sacrament was, without a Metaphor, made the *Covenant of Blood*, and the Conspirators united by it, to be bold and resolute in this Enterprize? Not

to mention other Abuses of sensual and carnal Men, too frequent among us, that can engage themselves in this Ordinance, to follow their Master's Steps; and, notwithstanding these Engagements, live like Swine and Devils. Nor need we wonder, why God suffers these Abuses, for he permits them as he doth other Sins, to let Men see at last, that their Condemnation is just. Besides, this makes those who use this Ordinance in pursuance of the right End of its Institution, more Glorious in God's Eyes, for this hath still been the Privilege of the true Church of God, to flourish like a Lilly among Thorns; and what the Apostle saith of *Heresie* in general, is most true of these Abuses, *There must be such Things in the World, that those which are approved may be made manifest,* 1 Cor. xi. 19.

*The Preceding Considerations reduc'd to Practice.*

**T**HE holier any Thing is that is abused, the greater is the Crime. When *Belshazar*, Dan. v. 1. was resolved to be drunk, had he made himself a Beast by drinking out of common Cups, tho' the Sin had been Great, and against Nature, yet it might have pass'd unpunish'd here, as other Villanies are; but when Nothing would serve his Turn, but to drink his Reason and his Wits away, out of the Bowls of the Sanctuary, and to add Profanation of the Vessels of the Lord's House, to all his Crimes, this alarm'd the Divine Vengeance immediately; and rather than not shew his Displeasure, God thought himself oblig'd to be at the Charge of a Miracle, which caus'd the fatal Hand upon the Wall, and the King's Overthrow follow'd within a few Hours after: And if the Abuse of Consecrated Vessels rais'd so great a Storm, What must the Abuse of Consecrated Reason, and Duties, and Mercies do? Sirs, your Reason

Reason is a Consecrated Thing; God hath set it apart for his Use, that you should consider and contrive how to get a Share among the Blessed hereafter: If you abuse it, and will let it serve you for no other End, but to teach you how you may grow Rich and Great, and fill your Bellies with *hid Treasures*, will not God visit for these Things? and will not his Soul be avenged on such Persons? Your signal Mercies and Deliverances are Consecrated Things; God hath set them apart, to put you in Mind of your Gratitude, to teach you Submission to his Will, and to walk humbly with your God; if after these you are careless, and live as regardless of your Duty as you did before, will not God reckon with you one Day for such Abuses? Should a poor Man take the Cordial you send him, and fling it upon a Dung-hill, how would you resent it? And can God like it, do you think, to see how like mad Men you tear off the Cloaths he gives you to cover your Nakedness; to see you live the Reverse of his Designs, to see you fight against him with his Mercies, and as it was in the Case of the Daughter of Jerusalem, Ezek. xvi. 17. to see you *take the fair Jewels of Gold, and of Silver he hath given you, and make to yourselves Images of Men, and commit Fornication with them?*

II. One great Abuse of his Holy Sacrament, is, to fancy, that like a Spell, it will charm Sin out of your Mortal Bodies, so that you need be at no Trouble to mortify it. The Sacrament indeed confers Grace, but it is objectively, as it contains very great Motives to a lively Faith, and Hope, and Charity; and it confers Grace too, as a Cause without which Grace would not be convey'd, because God hath promised in his Ordinance to be present, and as the Dew of *Hermon*, or as the Dew descends on the Mountains of *Sion*, so here the Lord commands his Blessing, even Life for evermore: But

still



still it doth not conferr Grace *Physically*, as if the meer Use of it would make you Favourites of Heaven, and Children of his Love. It's *Physick* indeed, which will work a Cure, but then the Person that makes use of it must be qualified for it, must be sensible that he is sick, and willing to be cured of his Spiritual Diseases, and then God will look upon him, as a *Father*, and manifest himself to him; look upon him, as a kind *Physician*, and make the Medicine effectual to him; look upon him, as a *Friend*, and take him into his Bosom, and say to him, as it is *Isa. xlix. 8.* *In an acceptable Time have I heard thee, and in a Day of Salvation have I helped thee; and I will preserve thee, and cause thee to inherit the desolate Heritages.*

III. The Abuses committed by some in this Sacrament, must not tempt us to neglect the Use of it. If the Abuse that others have been guilty of, were a sufficient Excuse to stay away, we might as well argue, that Meat, and Drink, and Cloaths, and Books, and Learning may not be used, because ill Men have perverted the harmless Design of them. We should count that Man a Fool, that should resolve, because a Man of such a Profession hath cheated him, therefore he will never deal with a Man of that Profession again; or because such a Person, who pretended to Strictness of Religion, hath plaid the Knave with him, therefore he will never trust a Religious Man again. The same Absurdity would he commit, that from the Abuse that others have run into, in the Holy Communion, should resolve to abstain from It; for this would be as much, as to resolve to be mad, because others are, and have been so. God hath furnish'd us with Faculties and Powers, to discern the Dross from the Silver, and the Tin from the purer Metal, and we have his Word to guide us, in distinguishing the Use from the Abuse; and as the Temperate Man still drinks Wine, though  
Thousands

## *The Crucified Jesus.* 61

Thousands in the World still pervert the Use of that Creature; so a good Christian can see no rational Discouragement from coming to this Table, though some have made it their Bane, and turn'd it into their own Destruction.

### *The PRAYER.*

**O** Most Gracious God, who hast given us Thine Ordinances for our Comfort and Edification, and directed us how to use them to Thy Glory, give me an understanding Heart, and a pure Mind, that they may be a Savour of Life unto Life to me. Let me not touch these Holy Things with unclean Hands, but purify my Soul, and cleanse it from that Filthiness, which doth so easily beset it, that I may be fit for Thy Divine and Glorious Influences. Lord, without Thee I can do Nothing; Thou art the Vine, and I the Branch; convey Thy Celestial Juice into this withered Branch, that I may revive and bring forth much Fruit; and have my Fruit unto Holiness, and the End everlasting Life, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*



## CHAP. VI.

### Of Receiving the Lord's Supper Fasting, and how far it is Necessary.

#### The CONTENTS.

*It is a Thing not absolutely Necessary, to receive the Lord's Supper Fasting: Several Reasons to prove the Assertion. Yet to receive it Fasting, is a Thing very Convenient, because it quickens Devotion, and is an Act agreeable to the mortifying Prospect of Christ's Death, and warranted by the Practice of the Universal Church. Total Abstinence from Food that Morning we receive, may be prejudicial to some Constitutions, which must therefore be indulg'd to eat something at Home. Cautions and Rules to be observed in Eating before we receive. The Decay of Fasting among Christians of this Age, an Argument of the Decay of Christianity. To Fasting before we receive, must be joined afterward Abstinence from Sin. The Prayer.*

I. **T**HAT it is not absolutely Necessary to eat the Lord's Supper Fasting, will appear from the following Arguments.

1. Neither Eating nor Abstinence do in themselves commend us unto God, for neither if we eat are we the worse, neither if we eat not are we the worse, saith St. Paul, 1 Cor. viii. 8. It's not the Belly God regards so much as the Heart, and the Frame of the Soul he ever respects more than the Bowels; the Pharisee, that lays the Stress of his Religion upon an empty Stomach, mistakes the Nature of God as much as the Pythagorean, who fancies God will



will be pleased with his choosing one Sort of Food before another; neither the former's Abstaining from *Swines-Flesh*, nor the other's Aversion from *Beans*, is an Offering acceptable to him, especially where they stand single, and have no other Vertues to bear them Company. God being a Spirit, loves to converse with Spiritual Natures, and such are our Souls; and an humble and broken Spirit prevail more with him, than all Outward Ceremonies whatsoever. The Jews, *Isa. lviii. 3.* were as much out, when they cry'd, *Wherefore have we fasted, and thou seest not?* as those *Luk. xiii. 26.* that said to Christ, *Have not we eaten and drunk in thy Presence?* One Act of sincere Contrition is a more pleasing Spectacle to God, than a thousand External Formalities; and doing his Will, a more acceptable Sacrifice, than a rueful Face. Fasting hath no Intrinsic Vertue, the Gracious Aspect God vouchsafes it, is upon the Account of something within, that looks very lovely in his Eyes, and that is a Conscience sprinkled from dead Works.

2. Christ's Example is a convincing Argument, that to receive it fasting is not absolutely necessary. Not only St. *Matthew, Matth. xxvi. 26.* but the other Evangelists assure us, that while Christ and his Disciples were eating the *Passover*, or as soon as they had eaten it, he took Bread, and blessed it, and brake, and gave it to his Disciples, and said, *Take, Eat, &c.* Had it been a Sin to do so, we may rationally suppose, the first Author of this Sacrament would have given no Encouragement to it by his Example; and though it's true, that may be sometimes lawful in a Prince, which may be an Error in the Subject; yet our Great Master laid aside that Piece of State, and appear'd in the Form of a Servant, and became obedient to that Law he would have his Followers live up to; he did not prescribe one Thing, and do another, but like a watchful General, put his Hand to that Plough, at which he would have others labour; and

and it's evident enough, that while he and the Disciples were Eating, or as soon as they had eaten the *Passover*, (and consequently they were not fasting) he bid them eat and drink of the Sacramental Bread and Wine, which accordingly they did, and we may be confident he would not have led them into an Error.

3. The Apostles afterwards, we see, were indifferent, whether they gave it to Men fasting, or to Persons who had been at a Meal just before, so they were but studious of a pure and spotless Conversation, and so much appears from what we read, *Act. ii. 46.* After they came from the Temple, *i. e.* after they came from the Common Prayer in the Temple, which was at *Nine* of the Clock in the Morning, and at *Three* in the Afternoon, they brake Bread from House to House, and giving it in the *Afternoon*, as well as in the *Morning*, we may justly conclude they laid no Stress upon People's receiving it fasting. However, it is plain, that the *Corinthian* Christians, by *St. Paul's* Allowance and Approbation, administer'd and receiv'd it after their *Love-Fests*; and while they observ'd the Rules of Decency, Sobriety, and Temperance, and Charity, and Seriousness in those *Agapa*, or Feasts of Charity, the *Apostle* found no Fault with their Communicating after them; but when they became Luxurious, and grew Exorbitant, and made Provision for the Flesh more than the Spirit, he justly changed his Discourse, and turn'd his former Gentleness into sharp Reproofs, and Apostolical Reprehensions; and he had Reason, for these Doings would have soon brought this weighty Ordinance into Contempt, and made Men abhor the Offerings of the Lord.

II. Notwithstanding all this, to receive it fasting, is a Thing very convenient.

I. *Because it quickens Devotion.* That we are not to come to the Table of our Lord with an Indifference

ferency of Mind, or Looseness of Fancy, or Carelessness of Affections, none can be ignorant: The sublimest Mystery requires the sublimest Thoughts, and a Mind as clear from gross and carnal Apprehensions, as Mortality will let us; but this is not to be done without Fasting, Meat and Drink filling the Brain with Fumes, and as you have seen a Cloud coming before the Sun, intercepting and darkening the brighter Rays of that noble Planet; so the greasy Stems and Vapours, which Feeding before, sends up to the nobler Parts, must needs, in some Measure at least, obscure the Understanding, the Sun in this *Microcosm*, and hinder it from Spreading and Dispersing its kindly Beams and Influences: And this was the Opinion, not only of the Primitive Believers, but of the *Pythagoreans* also, and other Philosophers, whose great Maxim was, That the *purest Thoughts* flow from an *empty Stomach*, or Self-denial in Meat and Drink. That the ancient Christians fasted so often, the Reason certainly was, to give Wings to their Devotion, and to make their Prayers fly the Faster, and with greater Alacrity to Heaven. This way they found was most proper to plant a Spiritual Temper in their Souls, and when they would mount up with greater Chearfulness above the Clouds, they gave themselves to Fasting and Prayer. And indeed, in some Constitutions at least, the Soul never acts more like itself, than when the Body gives it no Divertisement by Eating and Drinking for a Time. The more the Body is fed, the leaner grows the Soul; and the leaner the Body is kept, the fatter grows the Soul; all which is evidence enough, that to receive the Holy Communion Fasting, is the Way to receive it with the quickest, and therefore most suitable Devotion.

2. To receive it Fasting, is an *Act most agreeable to the mortifying Prospect of Christ's Death and Passion*. What? Look upon so dismal an Object with a full Stomach, or a pamper'd Body, which is enough to tempt us to say with *S. Thomas* in another Case, *Let us go,*



*that we may die with him, Joh. xi. 16.* He that comes to this Sacrament, comes to die with Christ, *i. e.* to die to Sin, and sure no sober Man will think Eating and Drinking to be a proper Preparative for so serious a Death: How absurd is it not to have all Things suitable in a great Solemnity? In the Communion we come to behold a Fasting Saviour, Fasting and Abstaining, not only from Common Food that Day he suffer'd, but Fasting from a Sense of the Charming Love of God, and from the Comforts and Communications of the Divine Nature, which by a Miracle withdrew its Shine and Splendor, and left him in the Dark; a severer Fast, than if those Three and Thirty Years he lived in the World, he had eaten Nothing; And can we behold this dreadful Fast, and not appear Fasting before the Altar? Besides, Do People make a Meal when they are going to a Feast? A greater Banquet we cannot go to, than that which the King of Heaven hath prepar'd; And shall we fill our Bellies before we appear here, and dull our Appetite to the Richer Food?

3. To receive the Lord's Supper Fasting hath been the Practice of the Christian Church for many Hundred Years; for when sad Experience taught the Fathers how unfit the preceding Love-Feasts made the Generality for Receiving Christ in his Ordinance, they thought themselves obliged, not only to separate those Love-Feasts from the Supper of the Lord, but to make strict Orders for the Celebrating of it in the Morning, and to charge all Persons to receive it with an empty Stomach; while the Heat of Persecution lasted, they were forced to receive it very early before Day, that they might not meet with Affronts or Disturbances from the *Heathens*; if they had known of the Time of their Meetings; but what Persecution made necessary at first, was made so afterwards by a Law; I mean by a *Law Ecclesiastical*; and therefore the Third Council of *Carthage* decrees expressly, That the Sacrament of the Altar should be taken and received by none,  
but

but such as are Fasting: A Thing so religiously observ'd, especially by the *Eastern Churches*, that when some of *S. Chrysostom's* Enemies had informed against him, that he had given the Holy Communion to Persons, who he knew had eaten at Home, before they came to Church; he falls a Protesting and Wishing, If he had done such a Thing, that his Name may be blotted out of the Catalogue of Bishops; nay, That Christ may exclude him from his Everlasting Kingdom. In *S. Austin's* Time, it was become an Universal Practice to take and receive it Fasting: And though in *Egypt*, not a few kept to the Old Custom of Receiving it after their Common Suppers, yet the Disorders, Irreverence, and Intemperance they fell into by that Means, hath been Defensive sufficient to wise Men, from following them in that preposterous Way of Receiving; so that we may truly say, that this Communicating with an empty Stomach, hath been the Practice of most Christian Churches ever since the Apostles Days; and this was Part of their Rules and Canons; and what hath been so punctually observ'd by most Churches of the World, ought certainly to weigh much with him that believes the Church to be the *Ground and Pillar of Truth*, as it is call'd *1 Tim. iii. 16.*

III. However, since it is possible, that some by total Abstinence from Common Food that Morning they are to receive, may make themselves unfit to receive with due Devotion, their Stomachs not being able to bear Emptiness, such must be allowed to eat something before they receive, whether they be Ministers of the Word, who must take Pains, and spend their Spirits on such Days, and sometimes are none of the Strongest; or other Persons of a weak and sickly Constitution: But in this Case, the following *Rules* must necessarily be observed.

1. *That we eat no more than what just serves to support Nature against Fainting.* Not only the Law of Self-preservation, but of Religion too, bids us keep our Bodies serviceable to our Souls. If the Tabernacles of Clay be out of Order, the Soul, which, in this Valley of Tears at least, works by the Organs of the Body, must needs languish too; and the Pen, which is the Body, being spoiled, or cracked, or weakened, the Scribe, which is the Soul, cannot write so fair as otherwise it would do. But then there is a great Difference betwixt keeping the Body from Fainting, and Pampering of it. He that before the Sacrament eats to Satiety, cannot be supposed to bring very lively Thoughts, or a profound Sense of the great Mystery with him to the Holy Table; so that the Quantity of Food that's taken before, must be such as leaves the Soul in a good Posture and Temper to be affected, and touch'd with the Solemnity and Greatness of the Ordinance.

2. *The Food we take before, must be of the coarser Sort,* that the Mind may be preserv'd in a mortify'd Frame. God, *Isa. lviii.* 3. finds Fault with the Jews for Allowing themselves in Pleasures while they fasted, to shew how unsuitable Carnal Recreations, tho' at other times lawful, are on such Humiliation-Days. This may justly be apply'd to Eating, before Men come to the Holy Sacrament: Pleasant Meat is unsuitable: To find Pleasure in Eating and Drinking before, spoils the Pleasure the Soul should take in this Ordinance. Christ, before he did eat the *Eucharist*, did eat, 'tis true, but it was unleavened Bread and bitter Herbs, which I reckon was as much as Fasting; for such Food cannot be supposed to be very palatable; and before the Love-Feasts, that preceded the Sacrament, were corrupted, the Christians did eat so moderately, that they seem'd to feed rather upon Discipline, than the Meat that was set before them, as *Tertullian* words it.

3. Even



3. Even that small Quantity of coarser Food, must be taken with pious Reflexions, and Contemplations of the far nobler Food, which, within a few Minutes after, we are like to be Partakers of. Serpents, they say, whatever Injuries are offered them, still their great Care is to preserve their Heads: If it be our Duty to be wise as Serpents, it must be our Care too to guard our Heads, our Minds I mean, especially where Necessity forces us to eat, before we come to the Lord's Table; that the serious Frame be not overthrown, and that it may appear, it is not Delight in Eating, but Desire to be the better able to converse with God, which makes us give our Bodies such necessary Refreshments as their Weakness requires. And if you ask'd me, What Reflexions are most proper in this Case? I need only send you to that Guest, *Luk. xiv. 15.* who sitting at the Table, said, *Blessed is he that shall eat Bread in the Kingdom of God!* So he that upon such Occasions gives his Body ordinary Food, may reflect on the Table in Christ's Everlasting Kingdom, where God's Glory will be the Meat, and the Light of his Favour the Drink, and Angels the Musicians, and glorify'd Saints the Company, and the Eternal Love of God the Canopy, under which the vast Armies of Saints and Martyrs will feast, and gather Everlasting Strength; Strength which no Sickness, no Illness, and no Accident can ever weaken or dissolve.

*The Preceding Considerations reduced to Practice.*

I. **W**E may take Notice here of the strange Decay of Christianity, especially with respect to Fasting; a Piece of Devotion, whereby the Primitive Believers effected very great Things: And it's to be fear'd, that the Over-Tenderness of Men to their Bodies in this Age, and a Fancy that every

Thing is necessary which their Appetite craves, is no small Hindrance to their Eminency in Vertue and Goodness. It's granted, that Men may be very Vicious, and yet great Fasters too, as one *John Scot* in *Scotland*, in the Year 1539. a Man of no Learning, and no good Qualities neither, who was able to abstain Thirty or Forty Days together from all Manner of Meat and Drink; whereof the King willing to make Tryal, shut him up in a Room within the Castle of *Edinburgh*, suffering no Creature to come at him: A little Bread and Water indeed was set before him at his first coming into the Room; but upon Examination, it was found that he had not so much as tasted of it in the Space of Thirty two Days. And going afterwards to *Rome*, the like Proof of his Fasting was given to Pope *Clement VII.* and some time after, preaching against King *Henry* the Eighth's Divorce at *London*, he was shut up in Prison, where he fasted Fifty Days, yet continued still a dissolute Man. But it is not the bare Abstinence that makes a Man a Christian, but the spending a Fast religiously, and to good Ends, works the Miracle of Holiness; and such were the Fasts of the Primitive Believers, who by such frequent Mortifications made their Graces tower, and climb, and culminate, to the Admiration of the unbelieving World; when they would conquer any Corruption, when they had a mind to arrive to any Excellency in Vertue, when they wanted a signal Spiritual Blessing; nay, when their Friends and Relations, or any Eminent Servant of God lay sick, they presently apply'd themselves to this Piece of Mortification, and found great Success: And it stands to Reason, that where the Soul gets thus above the Body, flights the Pleasures of the Flesh, determines to converse with God, and entertains herself with the Thoughts of His Greatness, and her own Vileness; God, who ever loves an humble Spirit, will look down,

down, and satisfy the longing Soul, and fill the thirsty Soul with Goodness. Yet,

II. Let's not think we have discharged our Duty, when we have receiv'd the Lord's Supper Fasting; that will signify but little, if after Receiving we do not fast from Sin. This is the acceptable *Lent*, and must be observed more religiously than the *Mahometan* doth his Month *Ramazan*: This is the Fast which the Lord hath chosen, and except our Abstinence from Food be in order to this Fast, God regards it no more than the Lowing of Oxen, or the Bleating of Sheep. To fast from Sin, is both a Preparative for the Lord's Supper, and must be the Consequence of it. This Fast must be the very End of our Coming to this Holy Table, and we eat and drink there, that we may be out of Love with this dangerous Meat. Nor is this Fast from Sin a Thing impossible, if by Sin, as we ought to do, we understand wilful and habitual Sin; and the Motives to this perpetual Fast are very cogent: He that believes that Sin is the Food of Devils, and the Meat of Hell, and the Festival of Fallen Angels, can have no great Stomach to it. Nothing starves the Soul sooner than Sin; and as pleasant as it may be to the Palate, the Soul suffers extremely by it, and falls into *Palsies* and *Apoplexies*. It makes it not only lean, but miserable too; it shuts her out from the Care and Tenderneſs of a Gracious God, and, in its pernicious Effects, goes beyond the Apples of *Sodom*; for whereas these, upon Touching of them, fall and shatter only into Ashes, that ends in Eternal Fire. The Ears must be stopt therefore against its Charms, the Eyes shut against its alluring Dresses; and thus we may wean ourselves from any Affection to this forbidden Fruit.



*The P R A Y E R.*

**O** My God! Thou art the most Charming Object, and though the sensual World will not be persuaded to believe it, yet it is because their Eyes are blinded. The enlighten'd Soul discovers such Beauty in Thee, as transcends the fairest Pictures that mortal Hands can make. Thou, who art the Creator of all Excellencies, must needs be more Excellent than all Thy Creatures. O how have I been mistaken in my Choice! How greedy have I been after the Meat which perisheth? To fast and abstain from that, I have thought Death and Misery; while I could be content to live without Thee; and to be deprived of the Communications of Thy Goodness, hath not so much as caused the least Solitude in my Breast. The Want of Thy Favour hath troubled me no more than the Want of Things which are contrary to my Nature and Constitution. I see now, where my Happiness lies, and to feed on Thee, I perceive, is to feed on that which is incorruptible. O kiss me with the Kisses of thy Lips, and my Soul shall leap for Joy. Make Sin odious to me, and make me as averse from it, as my Nature is from Poyson. Let my Desires be after Thee alone, and let me feel, that when I enjoy Thee, I have the best Meat and Drink, and that which will nourish me into Everlasting Life: Let Nothing satisfy me but to live for ever; Let that be my Ambition; Let that be my Resolution; Let that be my Endeavour. My Soul hath been precious  
in

in Thy Sight, Thou hast not yet condemned me with the World. Thy Patience hath long waited for me; while others have been sent into Darkness, Thou hast spared me, and suffer'd me to enjoy the Light of the Living. I will trespass upon Thy Goodness no more, I feel the Workings of Thy Spirit in my Soul, I feel Desires and Propensities to Goodness, I will cherish them; O help Thou me! Let those Drops of Goodness in me swell into Floods, and the Rivulets of Grace that run through my Soul, into larger Streams. Let Thy Voice be heard in my Soul, Thy Convincing, Thy Converting, Thy Pardoning, Thy Sanctifying Voice. At Thy Word, I will let down the Net; O let me inclose a Multitude of Vertues! Goodness hath been Meat I have had an Aversion from; now let it become my daily Bread. Teach me the Art of Abstinence, persuade me to abstain from that, which will certainly be my Ruin. Give me a Holy Greediness after Thy Word; let mine Ears delight to hear it, and mine Eyes delight to see it, and my Feet delight to walk in the Way of it. Lead me to the Rock that is stronger than I; let me freely sacrifice unto Thee. Let my great Endeavour be, to please my Redeemer, who hath saved my Life from the Nethermost Hell. He bids me follow Him; O Blessed Jesu! I will follow Thee whithersoever Thou goest! Only give me Alacrity and Readiness to make Haste after Thee, who art the Captain of my Salvation: To Whom, with the Father, and the Holy Ghost, be Honour and Glory for ever and ever. *Amen.*



## CHAP. VII.

Of the Elements in this Sacrament ; and First,  
of the Bread Christ made Use of, and of the  
Nature and Design of it.



### The CONTENTS.

*The Bread Christ made use of, was, in all Probability, unleavened Bread. The Reason why, in the Church of England, we make use of Bread that's leaven'd. Wheaten Bread made use of in the first Institution. Substantial Bread necessary in the Celebration of this Sacrament, not Wafers. Several Reasons why Christ made use of Bread in the Institution. God makes use of very mean and ordinary Things, to represent great Mysteries by them. Examination necessary, whether we are strengthen'd by the Holy Bread in this Sacrament. Several Signs and Characters of Spiritual Strength laid down. The Prayer.*

**T**HAT Christ made Use of Bread in this Sacrament, we have the concurrent Testimonies of the Evangelists ; and considering the Circumstances he then was under, cannot but conclude, that it was Unleavened Bread he used, because at that Time, when he instituted this Sacrament, no other Bread was to be had, it being the first Day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, as we are informed by St. Matthew, Chap. xxvi. 17. Now the first Day of Unleavened Bread, the Disciples came to Jesus, saying unto him, Where wilt thou, that we prepare for thee to eat the Passover ? If Christ did eat the Passover of Unleavened Bread, and instituted the  
Sacrament



Sacrament of the *Eucharist* after he had eaten the Passover, it must necessarily follow, that he used Unleavened Bread in this Institution; for, from the first Day of Unleavened Bread to the last, no Leaven was suffer'd to remain in any Jewish House whatsoever: For, *Seven Days shall ye eat Unleavened Bread, even the first Day ye shall put Leaven out of your Houses; for whosoever eats Leavened Bread from the first Day, untill the seventh Day, that Soul shall be cut off from Israel*, saith the Law, *Exod. xii. 15*. And therefore Christ, who came not to destroy the Law, but to fulfill it, must be supposed to have done according to this Law, and consequently, instituting this Sacrament immediately after the Passover, he could not possibly make use of any other Bread, but Unleavened, because there was no other to be found in the Houses of the *Israelites* at that time. And whereas it is said by some, that Christ did eat the Passover before the *Jews*, and consequently there might be Leavened Bread to be had; I answer, That he did indeed eat it before the *Jews*, but still the same Day that the *Jews* did eat it; Christ in the beginning of the Fourteenth Day of *Nisan*, the *Jews* about the latter End of it; and if so, no Leaven could be had; for, from the Fourteenth to the One and Twentieth, Religion exterminated and banished Leaven from all Mens Habitations. But here will arise a Question, If Christ made use of Unleavened Bread, *Why doth the Church of England use Bread with Leaven in it, in the Holy Sacrament?* But the Reason of this is,

1. Because the Primitive Church, and the Christians that succeeded the *Apostles*, and who could not but know the Sense of the *Apostles* in this Point, looked upon it as a Thing indifferent, whether Leavened or Unleavened Bread were used in the Sacrament; and therefore, in Times of Persecution especially, they made use of such Bread as they could get, never disputing whether it had Leaven or no Leaven in it. Indeed, about the Year 1053. there arose a great Controversy betwixt the *Greek* and *Latin* Churches, whether

ther Leavened or Unleavened Bread ought to be used in the *Eucharist*; the *Greeks* stand up for the Necessity of using of Leavened, the *Latins* for using Unleavened Bread; and the *Greeks* proceeded to that Heat in the Dispute, that they asserted, That Unleavened Bread was no Bread at all: But in this they were so palpably mistaken, that a Child, which had read the Bible, might discover their wilful Error, the Scripture calling both

Vid. Ver. LXX.

loc. Καὶ ἄρτος

ἀζύμους πεποιη-

μένους ἐν ἐλαίῳ.

Αἶρω.

the Leavened and Unleavened Composition of Meal and Water, by the Name of *Bread*, *Exod.* xxix. 2. and *Judg.* vi. 20. What *Michael* the Patriarch of *Constantinople* objects here, that ἄρτος, *Bread*, is derived from a Word, importing *Elevation*, or *Lifting up*, and therefore must be such Bread which hath received Elevation and Warmth from Salt and Leaven, is a Fancy and a Quibble, rather than an Argument: But this hath been the Custom of the *Greeks*, ever since they became Strangers to the Primitive Simplicity of the Gospel, to stand up for little and inconsiderable Problems of Divinity, as if they were Articles of Faith, and to defend a Ceremony or Circumstance, as hotly as if the whole Frame of Salvation depended upon it.

2. We make use of Leavened Bread in the Church of *England*, because the Substance or Essence of the Sacrament is not at all prejudiced by it; and in Things merely Circumstantial, the Church hath not only varied from the first Customs, but may lawfully vary, as She sees Occasion, as will appear more fully from what we shall hereafter lay down concerning Ceremonies. The Reason why *Christ* made use of Unleavened Bread was, because there was no other to be had at that Time; that which he chiefly intended, was Bread which feeds and nourishes the Body, thereby to represent the Spiritual Nourishment of the Soul, the greater Thing intended in this Sacrament; and since Leavened Bread will do this, as well as Unleavened, we need not be  
very

very scrupulous about it; tho', if the Church thought fit to alter the Custom, and use Unleavened Bread, I should be ready to subscribe to it, for no other Reason, but because it best represents the Temper a Christian ought to have at all Times, but more particularly at his Approaching to the Lord's Table, viz. Sincerity, and godly Simplicity, to which the *Apostle* alludes, 1 Cor. v. 8. *Therefore let us keep the Feast, not with the Old Leaven, neither with the Leaven of Malice and Wickedness, but with the Unleavened Bread of Sincerity and Truth.*

II. As it was *Unleavened Bread* Christ made use of in this Sacrament, so it was *Bread made of Corn*, and particularly of that Sort, which Bread is usually made of among us, and that's *Wheat*; for though the *Jews*, especially the poorer Sort, used Barley Cakes, and Barley Bread sometimes; and our Saviour himself took the five Barley Loaves, and distributed them to the Disciples, and the Disciples to the Multitude, *Joh. vi. 9.* Yet in the Passover, wherein they remembered the greatest Deliverance that ever happened to the *Jewish Nation*, it's probable, they made their Unleavened Cakes of the best Corn, i. e. *Wheat*, the rather, because in the Meat-Offerings and Cakes which they offer'd to God, they were commanded to use the finest Wheat-Flower, *Lev. ii. 12, 45.* and as their Deliverance from *Egypt* gave them a Title to that Land, one great Blessing whereof was, their being filled with the finest of the *Wheat*, *Psal. cxlvii. 14.* so it's like they would not in their Passover, in the Bread they used, omit the Commemoration of that Mercy; and the same Bread which Christ made use of in the Passover, we must suppose he made use of in the Institution of this Sacrament: This will give us Occasion to enquire, whether any other Thing Men make use of, instead of Corn-Bread, may be used in this Holy Sacrament; for it's certain that in some Countries they have no Corn, and divers Authors tell us, how much the Bread differs in the several



veral Parts of the habitable World, according to the Nature of the Soil, and Temper of the Inhabitants; the *Egyptians* heretofore made Bread of Millet, and Milk, and Water, and in some Parts of the *West-Indies*, at this Day, they make Bread of the Roots of certain Trees, which they dry, and powder, and then make up into Paste, or Bread, and so they do in divers Parts of *Africa*; and as it may be the Lot of many *Christians* to be cast upon such Places, so the Question may justly be ask'd, *Whether in the Administration of the Lord's Supper, being destitute of Bread made of Corn, they may, with a safe Conscience, make use of any other?* And most Divines answer in the Affirmative: For tho' the *Canonists*, among the *Papists*, will allow nothing to be Bread, but what is made of Corn, yet whatever it is, that nourishes like Bread made of Corn, is Bread to them, who are so nourish'd by it: And since the Reason of *Christ's* making use of Bread in this Sacrament, was to represent the Spiritual Nourishment of our Souls, by Application of the Benefits of his Death, or as we commonly speak, by his Body and Blood; Why should not any Nation, or People make use of that in the Sacrament, to represent this Spiritual Nourishment, which serves them instead of Bread, and give the same Nourishment to their Bodies that ordinary Bread doth? especially where Bread of Wheat, or Rye, or Barley is not to be had: Yet this is not to be applied to other Fruits of the Earth, such as Pears, and Apples, and Figs, and Melons, &c. as if they, in Case of Necessity, might be made use of instead of Bread; for though they nourish too, yet no Nation makes use of them as their Bread: And since Bread is not only used by *Christ*, but by all the Christian Churches in all Ages, something that hath the Nature and the Name of Bread must still be used in this Holy Sacrament; and all Care imaginable taken, that by making use of something else, Men run not into Profanation of this Ordinance.

III. As it was unleaven'd and wheaten Bread, *Christ* made use of in the Institution of this Holy Sacrament; so it was also *substantial Bread*, not a *Wafer*, as is now used in the Church of *Rome*. That *Christ* used substantial Bread, no Man ever doubted, that understood what Bread the *Jews* made use of in the Celebration of the Passover, and for a Thousand Years after *Christ*, the Church was wholly ignorant of *Wafers*. It's granted, that the Sacramental Bread was anciently call'd *Host*, from the *Latin*, *Hostia*, a Sacrifice, because the Bread represents the Body of *Christ*, which was offer'd in Sacrifice for the Sins of the World; (which Name of *Host* the Church of *Rome* still applies, at this Day, to their *Wafers* in the *Mass*) but then it was substantial Bread, or a whole Loaf, they call'd by that Name. How these *Wafers* first came in, is explain'd by *Honorius Augustodunensis*. The Report goes, saith he, that it was usual in former Times for the Ministers of the Church, when the Sacrament of the Altar was to be celebrated, to fetch a Quantity of Meal, or Flower from every House or Family in the Place they liv'd in, which Custom is yet observ'd among the *Greeks*, and of that to make the Bread, which was to be used at the Lord's Table, and distributed among the Communicants: But after the Church increased in Number, but decreased in Holiness, it was order'd for the Sake of carnal Men, that those that could, should communicate either every Lord's Day, or every third Lord's Day, or on the Festivals of the Year. But the People not coming, and there being no Need of so great a Loaf as formerly, it was thought good to use *Wafers* in the Form of a larger Penny; and that they might not want a Mystery for these new Doings, the People desired, instead of Flower, to offer every Man a Penny; that thereby they might acknowledge, how their Lord and Master was betray'd for Thirty Pieces of Silver. So far he: And it's probable, that from hence came the *Easter Offerings*, which as yet are usual in most Churches of the Nation.

Vid. Voss. Disp.  
19. de sacris Ccen.  
Dom. Symb.

Nation. And since these Wafers are the Effects of so great an Abuse, which the Wickedness of the Times brought into the Church, it can be no great Encouragement for those that would preserve the Solemnity of this Mystery, to keep them up, or plead in Vindication of them. It's true, the Wafers they use this Day in the Church of *Rome*, are made of Flower and Water: But,

1. There is not that Quantity of Flower and Water in them, as is requir'd in substantial Bread. Neither,

2. Are they wrought, or bak'd, as common substantial Bread is. Neither,

3. When they are made, are they design'd for any Thing but to seal Letters withall; I mean in the ordinary Use of them, before the Priest doth lay them upon the Altar, which shews that they are not intended for nourishing Bread, nor have they the right Taste or Smell, or Strength of Bread, neither are they commonly sold for Bread, nor doth any Man make use of them for his daily Bread, thereby to strengthen his Body: So that they do not answer Christ's Design, and the *Analogy* that ought to be betwixt the Thing signifying, and that which is signified; *i. e.* they being no substantial Bread, cannot exactly represent the substantial Nourishment of the Soul, and therefore have been most justly rejected by most Churches, but by that which hath made bold with God himself, with Scripture, and the express Laws of our Saviour, and substituted their own Inventions and Traditions.

IV. Why Christ made use of Bread in this Holy Sacrament, is next to be consider'd. Besides the general Reason I have already mention'd, *viz.* to represent the Nourishment he intends our Souls by his Death and Crucifixion, if we lay hold of it by an active and fruitful Faith, there may these following Reasons be also given for it.

1. To



1. To put us in mind that he was the Person prefigured by the Bread, variously prepared, and ordered under the Law, and in the Temple, and in the Rituals of the Jews. The *Shew bread* was to be before the Lord continually, *Exod. xxv. 30.* In the Original it's call'd, *The Bread of Faces.* לחם פנים

The Mystery of it was to shew, that Christ was to be the great Mediator, who should be always in the Presence of God, behold his Face, and live for ever to intercede for us; and though other Significations may be ascribed to that Right, yet Christ being the End of the Law, we must referr all principally to him; and as the Bread in their Offerings and Sacred Ceremonies was variously order'd, so it had various Significations, as the Fathers have observed. Bread, or Corn, while it was yet in the Ear, represented *Christ* veil'd, and seen darkly under the Law: Bread, or Corn rather in its Flower, *Christ*, as he was preach'd by the Prophets: Bread form'd and perfected, *Christ*, as he was clad in Flesh: Bread bak'd in an Oven, *Christ* being in the Virgin's Womb: Bread fry'd in the Pan, *Christ* in his Torments and Agonies: Bread toasted, *Christ* being Crucified. I will not warrant all these Applications from Scripture; however, being pious, and according to the Analogy of Faith, they ought not to be superciliously rejected.

2. *Bread is the Sign of Friendship.* It was so not only among the Jews, but the ancient *Pythagoreans* too, whose Symbol it was, *Take heed of breaking the Loaf*, i.e. Friendship; and that which makes it an Emblem of Amity and Love, is, because many Corns go together to make one Loaf, and the several Parts are closely compacted, do perfectly agree, and are united, and incorporated one with the other: *Christ* therefore made use of Bread, not only to tell us, that by Eating of this Bread, we are made the Friends of *Christ*, and *Christ* is made our Friend, if we eat as becomes the Gospel of *Christ*; but to hint to us, how we, that call ourselves *Christians*, should love one another, how

G dear

dear we ought to be one to another; and how like Members of the Mystical Body of *Christ*, we ought to be affected with one another's Misery; as in the Natural Body, if one Member be afflicted, all the rest sympathize with it; and if one suffers, all feel the Smart and Anguish.

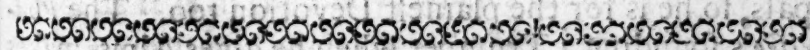
3. This was to *excite our Hunger after Christ*, as the Sight of Bread raises the Appetite of an hungry Man. If *Christ* be the *Bread which came down from Heaven*, as he saith himself, *Joh. vi. 51.* he must needs be the best, the sweetest, the purest, the cleanest, the wholsomest, the savouriest, and the most nourishing Bread, and to a Soul sensible of her own Vileness or Danger, the most delicious Object; such Souls he frequently calls, as knowing, that their Inclinations, Desires, and Breathings, to be satisfied with his Favour, must needs be vigorous and impatient of Repulses. For what makes the Covetous long after Gold, or the Seaman in a Storm, after his desired Haven? The one can satisfy the greedy Man's Necessities, the other free the Mariner from Fears and Dangers; *Christ* alone can satisfy the Necessities of a wounded Soul, and he is the only Port, in which a Soul that's weary of Sin, can find Rest, and Ease, and Safety from Danger. Where Men look upon these earnest Desires, as Excesses of Devotion, or Effects of a distemper'd Brain, 'tis a Sign they were never sensible of the Terror of Sin, nor did the roaring Lion ever fright their Souls by Suggestions of Despair, nor did they ever see themselves undone and miserable, else their Hearts and their Flesh would cry out unto the Living God. Ask a Man that's sinking into the Sea, what makes him cry for a Deliverer: Ask him that's fallen among Thieves, what makes him long after some good Christian to rescue him. Did Men feel the Load of Sin, and were their Souls sensible of what they say in the Communion-Service, that the Burden is intolerable, they would need no Prompter to cry with *David*, *O God, Thou art my God, early will I seek Thee: My Flesh longeth*  
for

## The Crucified Jesus.

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for Thee in a dry and thirsty Land, where no Water is,  
Psal. lxxiii. 1.

4. Christ used *Bread* here, that whenever we look upon it, we might remember our Duty of Dealing our Bread to the Hungry; by this Phrase our Kindness and Liberality to the Poor, is expressed in Scripture, *Isa. lviii. 7.* Indeed, if we reflect to this Sacrament, that we ourselves are Beggars, and expect Alms from our gracious Master, we have great Reason to do by the Poor and Needy, as we would have God do by our miserable Souls; when we come to this Table, how justly might he say to us, as Christ to the Woman of Canaan, *It's not meet to take the Childrens Bread, and give unto the Dogs*; for, how often have we with the Dog returned to the Vomit? But he deals not with us after our Sins; he bids us open our Mouths wide, and he will fill them, not with *Quails* and *Manna*, but with that which out-lasts both these; and then how natural is the Inference, *Hath my God fed me, a poor Worm, this Day, with the richest Bread, and shall I let his poor Members starve? Hath He in Compassion to my starved Soul, enrich'd it with his Love this Day, and shall not I express my Love to those who are in Want of common and ordinary Food?*



### The Preceding Considerations reduc'd to Practice.

1. **T**HIS puts us in mind of the Apostle's saying, *1 Cor. i. 27. God hath chosen the foolish Things of the World, to confound the Wise, and hath chosen the weak Things of the World to confound those that are Mighty*; Behold, when Christ institutes the Ordinances of the *Eucharist*, the greatest Feast, the richest Banquet that ever was seen or frequented by mortal Men; he ransacks not the Sea for Rarities, nor bids his Servants kill and slay the Fowls of the Air, or the Cattle upon a thousand Hills; but Bread, plain, common, ordinary



Bread, he causes to be set upon the Table, and by that expresses the sublimest Mystery of our Religion. God is not for outward Pomp, nor did he ever matter external Magnificence ; but by plain and simple Things, he hath done the greatest Miracles. These were not wrought by Men clad in Royal Robes, but by Persons who wore hairy Garments, and had Leathern Girdles about their Loins ; by Men that wander'd about in Sheep-skins and Goat-skins, in Caves and Dens of the Earth, of whom the World was not worthy ; by Men whom the World look'd upon as mad, and had seldom any Recourse to, but when Necessity forc'd them, and they knew not how to make shift without them. By the most contemptible Things, he hath wrought the greatest Deliverances. Indeed, nothing declares his Power or Majesty so much, as when he makes use of the meanest Things to effect those which are greatest. By Lice, and Frogs, and Caterpillars, he destroys the Land of *Egypt* ; and by Three hundred undisciplin'd Men he defeats the vast Army of *Midianites*. When he brings the First-begotten into the World, and bids all the Angels of Heaven worship him, all his State and Grandeur is perform'd in a Stable, in a Manger, in a Cradle: And as God, by the plainest and simplest Things, loves to bring Things of the greatest Consequence to pass, so he is for the plainest Devotion too. The *Pharisee's* sounding a Trumpet when he gives Alms, makes no pleasing Musick in Heaven ; but the poor Widow, that, without making a Shew, throws in her two Mites, even all her Living, into the Treasury, is the acceptable Votary. Therefore, grieve not, *Christian*, because thou canst not bring a Thousand Rivers of Oyl, or Ten Thousand Rams, into the Temple of God: Bring but an humble Heart, and he will take more Notice of it, than of all the Pomp and Retinue of *Bernice* and *Agrippa*.

II. Since the *Bread* in this Holy Sacrament is to represent our Spiritual Nourishment, it must needs be worth

worth our Enquiring, whether we find that Spiritual Strength and Nourishment in our Souls which is promised and commanded in this Ordinance. And there can be no better Sign of our Thriving upon this Spiritual Food, than if,

1. Our Corruptions do signally abate: As in the Body; if the ill Humours begin to be qualified, and the Sharpness of the Blood be taken off, and the Pains and Aches decay, it is a Sign the Body advances in Health, and Strength returns. It is so in the Soul; if our Envy, or Pride, or watchful Temper, or our Laziness in God's Service, or our Indifferency in Devotion, or our Backwardness to Duties, &c. decays and dwindles away, it is a certain Sign our Souls begin to be in an excellent Temper; for these are the Worms that hinder our Trees from growing, which if they faint and die away, the Trees are like to come to their full Growth and Height, and the Fruit of them to perfect Maturity.

2. If our Delight in the Things of God doth increase, our Delight in the Ordinances of God, our Delight in Meditation, our Delight in Speaking and Thinking of God, our Delight in Obedience, our Delight in doing Good, and being helpful to others? It is as great a Sign the Soul thrives upon this Spiritual Food, as it is in the Body, when a Man begins to look with a chearful Countenance, and the ruddy Complexion clears up, and the once sickly Person goes about his Business with Alacrity.

3. If we loathe any Thing that is offensive to our Blessed Redeemer. As an healthy Stomach doth loathe any Thing that is prejudicial to the Body, so the Soul is then in a good Plight, when that which is contrary to the Interest of the Cross becomes Odious to her; when it goes against her to do that which must needs be displeasing to Him that died for her; when it is a Grief to her to see the Sensualities Men wallow in, and to hear God dishonour'd, and his Name profan'd,

phan'd, is to her as if a Sword were run into her, as it was to *David*, *Psal. xlii. 10.*

4. If we do not content ourselves with such Things in Matters of Religion, as the Vulgar are satisfied with-all, but set the Examples of the great Saints before us, resolving to come up to their Excellency, and Zeal, and Love: If we do so, our very Enemies must be Witnesses that we thrive and grow strong upon this Spiritual Diet, and make Preparation for Eating and Drinking with Christ, at his Table, in his Kingdom, *Luk. xxii. 29, 30.*

### *The P R A Y E R.*

Sweet Jesu! Who art Life to my Soul, Balm to my Spirit, and in the greatest Misery canst give Ease; I have fed too long upon bitter Herbs: Sin, that hath been sweet to my Taste, hath proved very bitter to me in the End; and what Fruit had I then of those Things, whereof I am now ashamed? No Fruit, but Poyson, and Darkness, and Aversion from Goodness. I have been led away by my sensual Appetite, look'd upon the evil Tree, beheld the Fruit, that it was fair, but without Consideration of the dangerous Effects of it, and have eaten of it. This hath made my Soul look pale and wan; lovely indeed, in the Eyes of Devils, but deformed and homely in Thy Sight. I see I must change my Food, else I perish. And, O my Lord! What shall I feed on, that I may recover Strength? Thy Table affords the wholsomest Meat and Drink. Vouchsafe me a gracious Look, and bid me come. Pass by my former Aversion from these Delicates. Bid me sit down, and feed



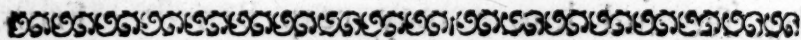
feed on Thee. Thou, Lord! art the River of Paradise, from whence Living Waters flow. Oh! let this Stream enrich my Soul, that I may be like a Tree planted by the Rivers of Water, which may bring forth Fruit in due Season; no such Fruit as once it was, black, and shrivel'd, and wither'd; but which may be amiable in the Eyes of God and Man; Fruit, whereby Thy Glory may be advanc'd; Fruit, whereby others that see and know may reap Benefit; Fruit, wherein my Soul may rejoyce; Fruit, which may end in Peace, in Peace of Conscience, in Everlasting Peace. Henceforward, when I remember Thee, O dearest Saviour! let me find such Vigour and Nourishment within, that I may look like Thee, altogether lovely: Favour is deceitful, and Beauty is vain; but to be like Thee, is Glory, and Life, and Bliss, and Happiness. I therefore eat at Thy Table, that I may be like Thee. Oh, speak Thy Blessing upon that Meat, and it will change me into Thy Image, from Glory to Glory, even by the Spirit of our God. *Amen.* Come, Lord Jesu! Come quickly.





## CHAP. VIII.

Of Consecration, and what Consecration Christ used. Of his Thanksgiving before he broke the Bread, and the Imitation of him in that Particular.



### The CONTENTS.

*Of the Word Consecration, what it imports, and what Things were consecrated in ancient Times. Consecration anciently perform'd with Prayer and Thanksgiving. The Virtue of Consecration, wherein it consists. Consecration of the Elements in this Ordinance perform'd sometimes only by the Lord's Prayer. The Church of Rome deviates from that Rule. Christ plac'd Consecration in giving of Thanks. Several Particulars, we may suppose, Christ gave Thanks for, mention'd. What Christ intended by Thanksgiving, with respect to our Instruction, specify'd. Praise and Thanksgiving essential in this Ordinance. The Way to arrive to Holy Thoughts. Why this Sacrament is by the ancient Church call'd Eucharist. The Prayer.*

I. **T**HE Word *Consecration* answers to the Hebrew **קדש** *Caddesh*, and **חנך** *Chanach*, and to the Greek **ἀγιάζειν**, **ἐνθεοῦ** *Zein* and **καθιερῶεν**, i. e. to set a Thing apart for Holy Uses; and in this respect, it is the same with *Dedication*; tho' Criticks make some Difference betwixt *Consecration* and *Dedication*; meaning that in the former, Things prophane and vulgar are set apart for an Holy Use in general; in the latter, vow'd and assign'd to a certain God, a Thing common among the *Heathens*, while they continu'd in Idolatry: In the *Old Testament* Consecration was used about *Persons, Things, Times and Places.*

1. *Persons*; Which is the Reason why *Aaron* and his Sons are said to be consecrated to God, *i. e.* set apart and ordain'd to minister in the Publick Service and Worship of God, *Exod. xxviii. 3.* And upon this Account, *Moses, Exod. xxxii. 29.* bids the *Levites* consecrate themselves, *i. e.* set themselves apart to revenge God's Quarrel against the Idolaters of the Golden Calf, and to give themselves to that peculiar and extraordinary Service, and express their Zeal for God's Glory, beyond all other People.

2. *Things*; and these are said to be consecrated, when they are set apart to be used in an Holy Place, for Religious Purposes; as the Silver and Gold, and Vessels of Brass and Iron, the *Israelites* should find in *Jericho*, are commanded to be consecrated to the Lord, *Josh. vi. 19. i. e. They shall be brought into the Tabernacle, or Place of Publick Worship, and there used in Divine Service, and no where else.*

3. *Times and Days*; Of this sort were the Festivals of the *Jews*, which were set apart for Publick Meetings, to worship God, and to perform the Duties requisite, and the Offices of the Publick Liurgy, *Ezr. iii. 5.*

4. *Places*; and such we find often set apart for God's Publick and Private Worship, as *Jacob* did *Bethel*, *Gen. xxviii. 18, 19, 22.* And *Solomon* and the Children of *Israel* dedicated the House of the Lord, *1 King. viii. 63. i. e. They did solemnly set that House, which Solomon had built, apart, for celebrating the Publick Worship of God in that Place.*

II. Nor is the Consecration of a Thing, a bare setting it apart for an Holy Use; but it imports also to do this with suitable Rites and Ceremonies, particularly with Prayer and Praises: Which external Performance may influence the Senses of Spectators, and cause greater Veneration and Reverence. So the Temple of *Solomon* was consecrated with Thanksgivings, and Supplications, and offering Sacrifices, *1 King. viii. 22, 62, 63.* And the Seventy Elders, *Numb. xi. 17.* were consecrated



crated by Imposition of Hands, as Ministers are ordain'd at this Day; and *Maimonides* adds, with a solemn Song, or Hymn, and these Words, *I lay my Hands upon thee, and be thou therefore ordained to this Office, or Dignity, or Employment.* *Aaron's* Sons were in like manner consecrated, by being anointed with Holy Oil, the Ingredients of which we have exactly set down, *Exod. xxx. 30, 34, 35.* And this Way of Consecrating we find imitated and transcribed by the *Heathen Nations*, who did run out into strange Superstitions, and extravagant Ceremonies, in their Consecrations of Things; as *Dan. ii. 5.* where *Nebuchadnezzar's* golden Image being to be consecrated, all Persons, great and low, are order'd to appear at the Sound of the Cornet, Flute, Harp, Sackbut, Psaltery, Dulcimer, and all kinds of Musick, &c. And these exorbitant Ceremonies in Consecrations of Things are very much kept up in the *Roman Church*; which seems to have transcribed *Heathenism* into *Christianity*. Indeed, Prayer and Thanksgiving were the most ancient Concomitants of Consecration: And these *Constantine* used at the Dedication of *Constantinople* having sent for this Purpose to the Fathers of the *Nicene Council*, to assist at the Solemnity: And having built a stately Church at *Jerusalem*, and adorn'd it with Gold, Silver, and Precious Stones, the Bishops, assembled in the Council of *Tyre*, were call'd in, by Supplications and Psalms, to consecrate the Building; or, to set it apart for a standing Place of Publick Devotion.

III. All the Virtue that can be suppos'd to be in Consecration, may be reduced to these Three Particulars.

1. The Thing consecrated puts us in mind of something Great, Sublime, and Magnificent; such as God is, or something which is nearly related to him: And so much we may guess from the Consecration of *Aaron* and his Sons; the History of which we have set down at large, *Exod. 29.* There was scarce a Ceremony used about them in their Consecration, but was and may

may be referr'd to some higher Thing. They were to be wash'd with Water, which was to put them in mind of the Purity and Innocence that was to attend their Lives and Profession. Their *rich Coat* they were to wear, suggested to them their Fruitfulness in all good Works. The *Breast-Plate* and *Ephod* that were put upon them, signified their Spiritual Knowledge and Sincerity. The *Curious Girdle* about them, was an Emblem of that Truth and Veracity they were to study. The *Bonnets* upon their Heads represented the Graces of God's Spirit they were to be adorn'd with. The *Mitre* and the *Crown* upon *Aaron's* Head, prefigur'd the Royal Priesthood of the Son of God, which was to appear in the World. The *Anointing Oil* that was to be pour'd out upon him and his Sons, told them that they must be Spiritual Men, and mind the Things of the Spirit; and that in their Consecration, they were to lay their Hands upon the Head of the Bullock and the Ram that were to be offer'd, shew'd, that tho' they were exalted above other Men, yet they were sinful Men, had need of Confession, and Deprecation of God's Judgments due to them for their Sins: For in laying their Hands upon those Beasts, they laid, at it were, their Sins upon them, and that Death and Misery themselves had deserv'd. And the same may be said of the Elements of Bread and Wine, when they are consecrated in the *Eucharist*: The Consecration puts us in mind of higher Things, than Bread and Wine, and suggests to us something more Noble, and more Glorious, which we are to fix our Thoughts upon.

2. Consecration directs to a greater Esteem and Veneration of the consecrated Thing; Not an Esteem which proceeds to Adoration; for that would make it Idolatry; but such an Esteem, whereby we raise our Thoughts, and have no such mean and low Conceits about the Thing, as before we had, when it was not yet set apart for an Holy Use, but look upon it as Representative of something more valuable: And therefore *Belshazzar* and his Nobles incurr'd the Displeasure

pleasure of God, because they look'd upon the Vessels of the Sanctuary as common Utensils, *Dan. v. 1, 2, 3.* And thus it is in the Holy Sacrament: After Consecration, the Elements require an higher Esteem than before; they being now no more common Bread and Wine, but Representatives of the highest and most spiritual Food imaginable.

3. Consecration commands a very serious Use of the consecrated Thing; and at the same time forbids all Lightness, Frothiness, Inattentiveness, and careless Thoughts. And this seems to be a Principle of all civiliz'd Nations in the World; who have, in all Ages, required greater Devotion in the Temple, than in the Market-Place: And the ancient Idolaters, that worshipped their Gods in Groves, intimated no less, since those Groves caused a Kind of Darkness; which Darkness, they thought, might over-awe the Worshipper into greater Seriousness and Devotion. And the same may be apply'd to the *Eucharist*: The Elements being consecrated, the Consecration ought to infuse very serious Thoughts into our Minds: Call them away from the World, and meaner Objects, and prompt us to devout Ejaculations, to a severe Attention, and to a suitable Admiration of the Bounty, Wisdom, and Goodness of God, who appears to us in this Sacrament, with all the Charms that make Souls in Love with Holiness: And all this is but suitable to the End of our coming to this Sacrament; which is, to consecrate ourselves to God, in Christ Jesus; and that is not to be done, without a very serious Use of this Ordinance, in which we acknowledge with the deepest Humility, that our Souls and Bodies, and all the Gifts and Graces we have, are the Effects of his Bounty; and declare our unfeign'd Purposes to speak, and act, and think as he would have us, and dedicate ourselves to his Service; professing that we will use the Blessings he hath given us, to his Glory, and the Good of his People; will resign ourselves to his Providence, and be content with the Lot and Portion



Portion he shall think fit to assign us; and be thankful for Afflictions too, as well as for Prosperity, they being both his Gifts and Blessings; and say, and confess, under the various Dispensations we shall meet withall, *Lord! not as I will, but as Thou wilt.* And who can forget himself so much, as to think that all this may be done without a serious Behaviour?

IV. The Church of *Rome* at this Day makes strange Work with Consecration of the Elements in the Supper of the Lord. And though they are told by one of their own Popes, *Gregory the Great*, that the Apostles consecrated only with saying the *Lord's Prayer*, yet they boldly, according to their Custom, place Consecration in the Priests muttering these Words, *Hoc est Corpus meum, hic est Sanguis meus: This is my Body, this is my Blood,* over the Bread and Wine: Which Words, partly by their own secret Virtue, and partly by Virtue of the Priest's Office, immediately upon their being secretly pronounc'd, change the Bread and Wine into the substantial Body and Blood of Christ; whereof we shall have Occasion to speak more largely in the Sequel. And this is their Consecration, contrary to the Sense of the Primitive Church, which was of Opinion that Consecration was perform'd by Prayer and Praises. And tho' some think that Christ us'd a peculiar Form of Consecration, which is either lost, or the Church did not think necessary to preserve; yet that Fancy is altogether needless, since we are told by the inspir'd Writers, that Christ gave Thanks: In which he either observ'd the usual Form used in the Passover, *Blessed be God, who hath created the Fruit of the Earth; and Blessed be God, who hath created the Fruit of the Vine: Or, Blessed be Thou, O Lord our God, King of the World, who bringest forth Bread out of the Earth; and Blessed be Thou, O Lord our God, King of the World, who createst the Fruit of the Vine: Or some other;* though

Vid. *Platin. in*  
*Sixt. 1. & Greg.*  
*M. 1. 7. Ep. 63.*

though it is more probable that he did not vary from the common Practice of the *Jews* in this Particular. And what is this, but consecrating the Elements, and sanctifying of them? *For every Creature of God is good, and not to be refused; for it is sanctified by the Word of God, and by Prayer,* saith the Apostle, 1 Tim. iv. 4, 5. The *Greek Church* at this Day lays the Stress of Consecration upon the Prayer of the Holy Ghost, as they call it; whereby the Holy Spirit of God is invited to come down, and make a Change in the Bread and Wine. In our Church we join Prayer and Praises, and the Words of Institution; which is the safest Way, and such as no Rational Person can find Fault with, though the Words of Institution are sufficient in this Case, which we discover in our Practice, when the first consecrated Bread and Wine are spent, and the Number of the Communicants require a new Consecration.

V. Though the Gospel tells only in general, that Christ gave Thanks, yet we cannot but suppose, that they were particular Things he praised the Divine Bounty for; and it is very rational to conclude, that he gave Thanks.

1. For the *Providence of God*, which watches over Mankind, and brings forth Fruit out of the Earth, to satisfy the Desire and natural Appetite of Man. God, the Creator of all Things, provides Food and Sustenance for all his Creatures. He causes the Grass to grow for the Cattle: He sends the Springs into the Valleys, which run among the Hills; they give Drink to every Beast of the Field; the wild Asses quench their Thirst, the Lions receive their Prey from him: He it is, that hath appointed Toads and Snakes to be proper Meat for the Stork, and Flies for the Nourishment of Spiders; for some Birds of the Air he hath design'd Variety of Seeds, and Worms of the Earth for others: He provides Leaves for Caterpillars, and those Insects for the Use of other Animals;

mals ; and the young Ravens that make a Noise, and upon that Account are said to cry to him, are fed and maintain'd by his Power : He prevents the Crocodile from doing excessive Mischief, by making the *Ichneumon* his Enemy ; and the lesser Fishes prove a Prey to the greater, by his Order. In all these Things the Divine Providence displays itself ; and because the rest of the Creatures are not endow'd with Reason to celebrate God for his Bounty, he hath placed Man in the Earth, and enrich'd him with an Angelical Soul, to be the Trumpet of his Glory, and to take Notice of God's feeding his Creatures of all Sorts and Sizes, and particularly the Children of Men ; and when he sees Bread before him, the Staff of Human Life, to admire the Wisdom, Power, and Goodness of the Almighty. And upon this Account it was, that Christ, as Man and Mediator, gave Thanks ; and when he took Bread, blessed the Author of it, who had made it agreeable to Man's Nature, and gave it Strength to nourish him ; sent the former and the latter Rain to nourish the Seed in the Ground, and gave his Sun-shine to warm and ripen the Corn into Perfection.

2. It was not God's Providence alone that he gave Thanks for, but *for the more endearing Expressions of God's Love to Mankind too.* And this we need not wonder at, when we read how at other Times he magnify'd his Father's Goodness to sincere Believers ; particularly, *Matt. xi. 25. I thank thee, O Father, Lord of Heaven and Earth, that Thou hast hid these Things from the Wise and Prudent, and hast revealed them unto Babes.* No Man ever saw the immense Charity and Goodness of God to the laps'd Progeny of *Adam*, in those lively Characters that he did : We can only speak of it with stammering Tongues, and give some faint Description of it, but he felt it. The Sense of that Love overspread his Soul, and he saw the Heighth, and Depth, and Breadth, and Length of it : He beheld the Miracles of this Love in all the amazing Circumstances, and what it was for God to give a Son to redeem a Servant,



vant, to expose a Lamb to buy a Wolf, and to let an innocent Sheep be led to the Slaughter to ransom Swine. He saw how that Compassion extended itself; and what it was for the Word to be made Flesh, and to run about to seek the lost Sheep, and when he had found it, to rejoyce over it, and call his Friends, the Angels, together, saying, *Rejoyce with me, for I have found him that was lost.* He saw what it was for God to humble himself, and take upon him the Nature of Man, a Thing infinitely below him, and to advance it above all Heavens, above Angels, Powers, Seraphim and Cherubim, and place it at the Right-hand of God. He saw what it was for Infinite Majesty to fall in Love with Misery; and for him that was ador'd by all the Host of Heaven, to make himself of no Reputation, on purpose to magnify his Mercy in the greatest Misery. He saw the happy Strife and Contention that was betwixt God's Justice and Mercy: He saw how these Twins struggled in the Womb of Eternity, and Mercy got the better, and triumph'd over the Almighty's Rods and Axes: He saw the Beginning, Progress, Order, and Beauty of that Love: He could measure the vast Distance betwixt Heaven and Earth, betwixt God and Man, betwixt the Judge and the Malefactor, betwixt Infinite Purity and extreme Wretchedness, betwixt Righteousness and Sin, betwixt perfect Innocence and perfect Misery. And what a Paradox it must be to the Holy Angels, to see that Light, which lights every Man that comes into the World, submit to the Darknes of the Grave, that some of *Adam's* Posterity might be Partakers of the Inheritance of the Saints in Light! This he saw, and as a Man, who was to shew his Church an Example, he gave Thanks.

VI. Christ's Actions, as they were intended for our Instruction, so we cannot think that his giving of Thanks was only to express his own Devotion, as Mediator; but that it was design'd to teach us,

1. *Never*

1. *Never to sit down at our common or ordinary Meals, without praising God* for the Blessings his bountiful Hand hath vouchsafed unto us. This, it seems, is so necessary, that the Holy Ghost reckons those Men among the Workers of Iniquity, that sit down to Meat, and praise not the Creator for the Provision he hath made for them, *Psal. xiv. 4. Have the Workers of Iniquity no Knowledge, who eat Bread, and call not upon the Lord?* We render the Words, *As they eat Bread*; our Translators thinking the Expression to be a Similitude to express the Greediness of Persecutors, who make a Prey of God's Servants; but the Particle *As* being left out in the Original, the Words denote another Sin of those Men that do eat Bread, and call not upon the Lord at their Eating. 'Tis true, the Duty seems to be observ'd by most People; and there are few so prophane as not to say Grace at their Meals; but it is for the most part done so slovenly, and so carelessly, without any Sense of the Greatness of the Duty, and of the Goodness of God, that it is made a meer Formality, which is as bad as the total Omission of it. The giving of Thanks before and after Meals, must be performed with a Sense of our Unworthiness, and God's Charity: This is to be thought and taken Notice of, as much as the Meat that is set before us; and Admiration of God's Compassion in Feeding us will add to the Relish of the Victuals set upon the Table; and that is to eat to the Glory of God, as the Apostle saith, *1 Cor. x. 32.*

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2. It was also to teach us *Gratitude to our Benefactors here on Earth.* Though Men are but the Instruments whereby the Almighty's Blessings are convey'd to us, yet there is a Gratitude due to them, and such Gratitude as is expressed in kind Offices, and Readiness to assist and help them when they stand in need of our Services. But then this Gratitude must not be stretched to assisting of them in their Sins, or complying with them in their Viciousness and Debaucheries, or flatter-

ing them in their sickly Passions. Man must not be pleased to the Dishonour of God: And where Dust and Ashes is loved more than he, he protests we are not worthy of him. But to pray for them, to honour them, to study and embrace all lawful Opportunities to express our Respect and Esteem of them, to requite the Kindnesses with equal Civilities, or spiritual Advice, and Counsel, and Consolation, is to act like Persons prompted by Christ's Example to be thankful.

3. It was more particularly to *direct us in our Praises and Thanksgivings when we come to the Table of our dearest Lord?* Here certainly, if any where, our Hearts ought to be fixed, and ready to sing, and give Praise;

1. For putting us *in a way of being pardon'd, and happy for ever.* We were all concern'd in *Adam's Fall*, had all forfeited our Right to God's Favour, and the Happiness we might have expected at his Hands: God might have lock'd up the Gate of Mercy, and made the Access to it impossible: Having desperately turn'd our Backs upon him, he might have let the Rebels sink deeper and deeper, till they had come into the bottomless Gulf of Eternal Misery; and, no doubt, all the Host of Heaven would have applauded his Justice. And for him, who was cloath'd with Majesty and Honour, unexpectedly, and of his own Accord, to turn the Stream, and to promise a *Saviour*; and, instead of making a Way to his Anger, shew Men a Way to his Bosom; and in the midst of all this Confusion and Perplexity, to proclaim the acceptable Year to the poor Prisoners: How can this be thought of in the Holy Sacrament, without Praise and Admiration?

2. For revealing this wonderful Love to us: A Favour Thousands of Heathens and Infidels enjoy not at this Day; nay, are wholly ignorant of: A Love which is a Mystery, that puzzles the Understanding of the wisest Men. How God intends to deal with *Heathens* and *Mahometans*, is hard to determine; only in general we are told, that those *who have sinned without Law, shall be judged without Law*, Rom. ii. 12. Nor can we assign a just



just and satisfactory Reason, why he makes not these Nations Partakers of the glad Tidings of the Gospel; much less, why he continues these Revelations to the Christian World, though corrupt and debauched to a Prodigy: But this we know, That if any Thing in the World deserves our Praises, this, that we have such a Treasure communicated to us, deserves it; and more especially in this Sacrament, where this Myſtery of Reconciliation is a most proper Object of our Meditation.

3. For *passing by the Apostate Spirits*, and offering the Mercy of Reconciliation to the Children of Men. The evil Angels sinned as well as we; yet the Son of God took not upon him the Nature of Angels, but took the Seed of Abraham. 'Tis true, there was more to be said for Adam's Fall, than that of Lucifer: That Son of the Morning was all Spirit, and Understanding; and Man had a Body of Earth about him, which, tho' not troublesome in Paradise, yet was the apter to receive Impressions of Sin from external Objects. The rebellious Angels were the first that made a Breach betwixt God and the Creature, and Man was seduced by them; yet still these Spirits, as bright as they were, were Creatures; and as Creatures, mutable; and as mutable, subject to falling; and falling, might expect Mercy and Compassion from an All-merciful Master; yet in the great Work of Redemption, no Regard is had to them, but to Man only; and he alone, with his Race and Posterity, is put in a Possibility of being sav'd and pardon'd; a Mercy fit to be remembered in this Sacrament, but not to be remembred without Thanksgiving and Prailes.

4. For the *Opportunity we have of Remembering Christ's Death* in the Holy Sacrament: That we have Liberty to meet in the House of God, to behold his Power and Glory, to speak of his Love and Compassion, and to come to his Table, and to come so often, and so freely, without Disturbance or Molestation, without Fear of Danger from the Tabernacles of Edom, or from the Ishmaelites, from Moab, or the Hagarens. Tho' these are Things which seem to be no great Matter to an

Eye that looks on Things superficially, yet to a Person that knows how in the *Greek Church* the Holy Sacrament is consecrated but once a Year; how in *Heathenish Countries*, where Ministers of the Word are scarce, this Ordinance is used but seldom; and how great an Hindrance to Goodness the Celebrating it but rarely is; how apt the inward Man, in such Cases, is to faint, and languish, and grow sick for want of it, will think himself oblig'd to open his Heart and Mouth in Praises at this Holy Table, and adore the Divine Bounty, which hath given him Will, and Strength, and Opportunity to come to this comfortable Ordinance.

5. For feeling our Hearts affected with the Mystery of Reconciliation, or finding in ourselves those happy Qualifications which make us worthy Receivers at this Table. To feel in our Hearts a lively Faith; a Faith, which, with *Moses*, sees him that is invisible; a Faith that overcomes the World; a Faith that purifies the Heart; a Faith that, with *Abraham*, moves us to Sacrifice and offer that to God which is most dear to us; a Faith that makes us patient under Reproaches and Injury; a Faith that is fruitful in good Works. To find in ourselves an Hope that makes us not ashamed; an Hope that makes us wait for the Kingdom of God, as the Husbandman waits for the Fruit of the Earth; an Hope that upholds our Hearts in Afflictions; an Hope that makes us look upon that within the Veil, into the Sanctuary of Heaven, and counts the Troubles of this present Life not worthy to be compared with the Glory which e'er long shall be revealed in us. To find in ourselves an Holy Charity, which believes the best of our Neighbours, and thinks no Evil, except there be very great Cause for it; a Charity which suppresses Revenge and Malice; and not only suppresses it for the present, but labours to destroy it too; a Charity which moves us to Kindness and Compassion; not only verbal, but actual; a Charity which makes us tender-hearted, forgiving one another, and forbearing one another. To find all this in some Measure, must

must needs fill our Hearts with strong Desires and Endeavours to be thankful.

VII. This Praise and Thanksgiving cannot but be essential to this Holy Sacrament, not a meer Ornamental Thing, without which the blessed Effects may be perceiv'd and felt. For,

1. Is it possible to behold God's bleeding Love, and not cry, *Praise the Lord, O Jerusalem; Praise thy God, O Zion?* Is it possible to see the surprizing Humiliation of the Son of God, and not to say, *Bless the Lord, O my Soul, and all that's within me bless his Holy Name?* Is it possible to see God offer himself for his Enemies, and not to sing, *Lord! what is Man, that thou so regardest him? and the Sons and Daughters of Men, that thou hast such Respect to them?* Is it possible to see Innocence nailed to the fatal Cross, not for any Sins of its own, but for our Transgressions, and not to break forth into Admiration, with *S. John, Behold what manner of Love the Father hath shewn to us, that we should be called the Sons of God?* The Heart must be of Stone that can survey these Wonders, and be silent, or dumb to joyful Praises.

2. What Comfort or Consolation can be supposed to flow into the Soul without it? Praise is the Gate of Mercy: The Soul that praises the Divine Love much, will have a greater Sense of his Love, and feel the Power of it, and feel how it melts the Heart, supplies the Spirit, softens the inward Man, and makes it fit for the Impress of the Image of the Son of God. As the *Jews* say of the Spirit of Prophecy, That it rests on valiant and chearful Men; so it may be said of the Divine Love, where the Soul is much, and often engag'd in Praises of it, there it loves to dwell, there it is ready to build Tabernacles, and take up its Residence.

*The Preceding Considerations reduc'd to Practice,*

I. **E**VEN the meanest Capacities from hence learn the Way to arrive to Holy Thoughts, viz. by making the most ordinary Blessings Occasions of Praise and



Thanksgiving. Nothing is more common than Bread, yet for this the Son of Man gave Thanks; and in doing so bids us imitate his Practice, when the like familiar Mercies come before us, or present themselves to our View. About the time of the Council at *Constance*, two Cardinals, as they were travelling upon the Road, not far from the City, saw a poor Shepherd weeping; and thinking that some sad Accident might have befallen him, either his Dog lost, or some of his Sheep stolen, had the Curiosity to ask him the Reason of his Tears; who answer'd, *I am looking here upon a Toad, and cannot but weep to think what an ungrateful Beast I have been to my God, to whom I never before in all my Life gave Thanks that he did not make me so homely and so odious a Creature.* The Truth is, you and I can hardly walk the Street, but we meet with Men either ragged or lame, or maim'd, or blind, or dumb, or some other way deform'd, and extreamly miserable: Can we look on such Objects, and not think with ourselves, what a Favour and Mercy it was in our great and gracious God, not to plunge us into that wretched State, but to give us Necessaries, and Conveniences, a right Shape, and Soundness of Limbs, &c. These, 'tis true, are but very ordinary Blessings, yet if we consider how many Thousands want them, and that God, who can do all Things, and whose Hand is to be seen in all Things, might as easily have reduc'd us to such a miserable Condition, as he hath done others, and that it is nothing but his infinite Goodness and Wisdom that hath made this Distinction; this cannot but quicken our Understandings: And if so, none of us can complain, that we have no Faculty of furnishing our Minds with Holy Thoughts. To this Purpose, certainly, was our Reason given us, that we might look on such Mercies with spiritual Reflexions and Praises; and these Praises are Holy Thoughts. Nay, the Task is very easy, and there is nothing lies more in our Power, than by taking a View of such Blessings, to think, *This God hath done, this is part of his Charity, this is a Character of his Bounty: What am I, and*

*what*

what is my Father's House, that God hath brought me thus far ! And as it is easy, so it is profitable too ; for this will fill our Minds with humble Thoughts, and teach us to have a low Opinion of ourselves, it being impossible to think ourselves very unworthy of God's Favours, and not to despise ourselves.

II. I told you in the first Chapter of this Discourse, that the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper among the Ancients was frequently call'd the *Eucharist*. Here we see the Reason of it ; for as the Word *Eucharist* imports Praise, so Thanksgiving is one of the principal Actions and Offices in this Sacrament. The Church of Rome will have it call'd a *Sacrifice*, because in the Primitive Church it went by that Name : We deny it not, but then they meant by it a Sacrifice of Praise ; and this Sacrifice we exhort every one of you to offer, when you remember your *Great Master's Funeral* ! Give Thanks for that Death, when you are preparing yourselves for this Spiritual Feast ; Give Thanks when you feed at this Holy Table ; Give Thanks when you depart from that Banqueting-House ; Give Thanks unto the Lamb that was slain, bless him for his Wounds, bless him for his Cross, bless him for his bloody Sweat, bless him for all his Sighs and Groans, bless him for his Merits, for thro' these your Souls must triumph over Hell, and Sin, and Devils. But then, take heed of Praising him at Church, and Affronting him at Home : These Praises must be uniform, and equal, and constant ; not that you are oblig'd in all Places to speak his Glory, whatever Business you have, or that you must do nothing but sing Psalms to him, where-ever you are ; but your Upright and Christian Behaviour in all Places, is a Glorification of his Mercy : For you are a chosen Generation, a Royal Priesthood, an holy Nation, a peculiar People, that ye should shew forth the Praises of him who hath called you out of Darkness into his marvellous Light, 1 Pet. ii. 9.

*The P R A Y E R.*

**O** Thou who inhabitest the Praise of *Israel*, our Fathers trusted in Thee; they trusted, and Thou didst deliver them; they cried unto Thee, and they were delivered; they trusted in Thee, and were not confounded: Praise waits for Thee in *Sion*. Thou deserveest my devoutest Praises, my most hearty Thanks, my loudest Celebrations: Can I think of what Thou hast done for me, and be loth to praise Thee? What should I do but praise Thee? All that I see within me, or about me, is Mercy; my Meat, my Drink, my Cloaths, are Mercies. But, Oh! what a Mercy is that Spiritual Food Thou settest before me at Thy Table: Oh! let my Mouth be filled with Thy Praise all the Day long! I am sensible not only of the Necessity, but the Comeliness of it too. It sets a Lustre on my Soul, it is an Ornament to my better Part, it makes me glorious in Thy Sight. Oh! teach me the Art of praising Thee: Let me but love Thee, and I cannot but praise Thee: My Love will dictate Words, and suggest Meditations, and I shall speak of all Thy wondrous Works. Let this be my greatest Delight, my greatest Joy, my greatest Pleasure, that I may praise Thee at last with all the Saints and Angels, to Eternal Ages, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*





## CHAP. IX.

### Of Breaking the Bread, and the Mysteries of it.

#### The CONTENTS.

*The Action of Breaking Bread, borrowed from the Jews, used by Christ to put us in mind of his Crucifixion; Of the broken State of Mankind; Of his going to break down the Partition-Wall between the Jews and Gentiles; Of the Communion of the Body of Christ; Of our Coming to his Table with Broken, Contrite Hearts; Of his Readiness to comfort the Bruised and Broken Spirit; Of the Vertue and Power of his Death, in Breaking the Force of God's Wrath against us; Of the Miracle that was to happen at his Death in the Earth and Rocks, &c. And of the strange Divisions that would be about this Sacrament. The Action of Breaking the Holy Bread, doth not interfere with the Canon in the Rule of the Passover, that not a Bone of the Lamb should not be broken. The Church of Rome is to blame for not Breaking the Bread. Christ, as well as the Disciples, received the Communion. Reflexions to be made by Christians when they see the Bread broken. The Prayer.*

- I. **A**Mong the Jews, as no Man durst eat Bread without Consecrating it by Thanksgiving, so no Man gave Thanks for the Bread, but he broke part of it, did eat of it, and gave it to the rest that were with him at the Table; and the Master of the House, if present, was usually the Person that did all this, gave Thanks, and dealt the Bread about: To this End the Loaves among the Jews were made with divers Cuts or Incisions, that when they were brought to Table, they might be broken with greater Ease

Ease by the Head of the Family, and distributed to those that did eat with him. Among the ancient *Romans* it was otherwise, for tho' they had Cuts and Divisions upon their Loaves, yet those Cuts were but four in all, in the Shape of a Cross, to the End that when they came to reach it to their Guest, they might easily break it into four Parts; which was the Reason why they call'd the Portion that fell to one Man's Share *Quadra*, or the fourth Part of a Loaf. If Christ imitated any Custom in breaking Bread, 'tis most probable he followed that of the *Jews*, from whose Manner of Living he used not to vary, if their Actions and Customs had nothing of Sin in them; shewing thereby, how loath we should be *Quieta movere*, to change or alter Things in a Church or Nation, which, through a long Succession of Time, have been receiv'd, provided there be nothing of Immodesty, Superstition, or Indecency, or Irregularity in it. The Unleaven'd Cakes of the *Jews*, they use at this Day in the Celebration of their Passover, are, in all Probability, Relicks of that ancient Way among their Country-men, of ordering their Loaves, and making them with many Cuts and Divisions in them, whereby the Master of the House took Occasion to break off a just and convenient Piece for each Member of his Family. But though Christ, in Breaking the Sacramental Bread, might borrow that Rite and Action from the *Jews*, yet we must not suppose, that therefore he had no farther Design in it, but rather sanctified it into a Mystery, as he did the *Washing of the Feet* receiv'd among the *Jews*, Joh. xiii. 14, 15.

II. As breaking the Sacramental Bread was an Action design'd to represent several Things of great Importance, so the Things thereby represented may justly be suppos'd, and piously believ'd, to be the following.

1. An Emblem it was of *that barbarous Fact* the *Jews* were like, in a few Minutes after, to commit against his  
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Sacred Person, viz. breaking his Sacred Body by the Torments of a painful Crucifixion: This Body of his, spotless as the Sun, harmonious as the Strings of a well-tun'd Lute, the miraculous Product of the Holy Ghost, purer than Virgins Wax, big with the richest and choicest Blood, subject to no inordinate Desire, was in a few Hours like to be the Scorn of Soldiers, the Sport of Scribes, and the Laughing-stock of supercilious Pharisees; within a few Minutes, his Body was to be lash'd, buffeted, beaten, wrench'd, and stretch'd out upon the Cross: Here his Flesh was to be torn with Nails, the Skin to be broken, the Veins, those precious Springs, to be open'd; and he that was fairer than the Children of Men, was soon after to be without Form or Comeliness, a Man of Sorrows, rejected and despised of Men, to be handled like a Slave, treated like a Malefactor, crucified like a Thief, and used like the worst of Mankind: Therefore he broke the Bread, to represent this inhumane Attempt. Such Pains did our Blessed Master take with his Disciples, to prevent their being surpriz'd with his Passion: He had frequently given them Notice of it, arm'd them against the fatal Hour, and not only in general told them he was to suffer, but here in this Action describes the very Manner of it; and in Breaking of the Bread, hints to them, how that Noble, that Curious, that Excellent Frame would be disorder'd, broken, and destroy'd.

2. *He broke the Bread*, to shew, that Man, for whom he was to suffer, was in a broken, forlorn, and undone Condition, a Condition which requir'd an Almighty Saviour to put under his Shoulder, to rescue the miserable Creature from the Thralldom of Damnation. Mankind was indeed in a very broken State at that time, not only with respect to the various Divisions that were among the *Jews*, and in other Parts of the World, but with respect to their Sins, Errors, and Corruptions. Idolatry had not only over-spread the habitable World, but was come to a prodigious Height; many Sins, which even the Law of Nature condemn'd,



condemn'd, were become Vertues : And to that Impiety Mankind arose, that not a few of their Vices were consecrated unto Deities ; insomuch that to be lewd, was Religion ; and deified Vices had their Votaries. Among the *Jews*, who were Keepers of the Oracles of God, the Great Seal of the King of Heaven ; though they went not a Whoring after Idols, yet the Religion that remain'd among them, was turn'd into meer Formality and outward Shew : The Moral Law, that Eternal Standard of Truth and Goodness, was in a manner trampled under Foot ; the Traditions of the Elders enervated its Force, and the false Glosses of the *Pharisees* made the Divine Commands of no Effect. In a word, the Pillars of Religion were every where broken, the very Foundation was undermin'd, and both *Jews* and *Gentiles* were intoxicated ; the former with Hypocrisie, the other with Prophaneness. How desperate both their Conditions were, the Apostle shews at large, *Rom.* Cap. i. and ii. and more succinctly, *Rom.* iii. 9, 10, 11, — 19. *There is none righteous, no not one ; there is none that understands, there is none that seeks after God, &c.* Christ broke the Bread therefore, to shew how necessary it was for him to be broken upon the Cross, to reintegrate and make whole the broken and forlorn State of Mankind ; which makes him say afterward, *This is my Body, which is broken FOR YOU.*

3. *He broke the Bread*, to shew, that He it was who was to break down the Partition-Wall, that separated the *Jews* and *Gentiles*. Till the Son of God was crucified for the Sins of the World, there was so great an Antipathy betwixt the *Jews* and *Gentiles*, that the Hatred was thought Duty, and the Enmity, Religion ; and as the *Heathens* looked upon the *Jews* as the vilest of Mankind, so the *Jews* were even with them, and looked upon them as abominable ; and to eat and drink with a *Gentile*, was counted a Crime ; and to make any Expressions of Kindness or Favour, Impiety ; to shew him the right Way in a Journey, or to lead him

to

to a Spring of Water in case he were a thirsty, or to lie with him, or to contract Marriage with any of them, was as detestable as to eat Swines Flesh. And it was a Maxim in the Jewish Divinity, That the Holy Ghost could not rest upon an *Heathen*; which made the Jews, *Act. xi. 2, 3.* fall out with *Peter*, because he went unto Men uncircumcised, and did eat with them, and preach the Gospel to them. Christ, by his Death and Resurrection, was to destroy that Enmity, and to make the *Lamb lie down with the Wolf, and the Lion with the Calf*, according to the Prophecy of *Isaiah*, Chap. xi. 6. And so it came to pass, after his Resurrection, and the Effusion of the Holy Ghost, *Peter* open'd the Door of Salvation to the *Gentiles*, and the Holy Ghost came down on the Uncircumcised, as well as on the Seed of *Abraham*; and both Nations became one Flock, one Company, and one People, under the Great Shepherd of the Sheep, *Christ Jesus*; and they who before hated one another mortally, now fell into one another's Embraces, and saluted one another with an Holy Kiss. Upon which Account, the Apostle says, *Ephes. ii. 14.* — 18. *Christ is our Peace, who hath made both one, and broken down the Middle-Wall of Partition between us, having abolished in his Flesh the Enmity, even the Law of Commandments contained in Ordinances, for to make in himself, of twain, one new Man; so making Peace.* He broke the Bread therefore, to signify the glorious and charitable Act.

4. *The Bread which we break, is it not the Communion of the Body of Christ?* saith *S. Paul*, *1 Cor. x. 16.* And this we may justly believe to have been our Master's Design in this Action, for the Apostle received it of the Lord; and what Christ had taught him, he communicated to his Hearers: And his Breaking, both shews and commands our Union and Communion. Though he broke the Loaf into several Pieces, to give to the respective Communicants, yet those Pieces were still Parts of that Loaf; and this was to shew how near and dear we Christians are, and ought to be to one another:

another: This speaks us Fellow-members, and how tender we ought to be of one another's Welfare, as one Member is of the Safety of another. So that, tho' we are many Members, yet we all make one Loaf, one great Body, whereof Christ is the Head, 1 Cor. xii. 27. And this makes all Rancor, Malice, Envy, Hatred, Pride, and Ill-nature, absurd, odious, abominable, and intolerable among Christians, not only at the Holy Sacrament, but in their Conversation too: For, how strange, how surprizing would it be, to see one Piece of Bread quarrel with the other of the same Loaf? And would to God it might be as surprizing, to see one Christian fall out with another.

5. *He broke the Bread*, to hint to us, with what Hearts we ought to come to the Table of our Lord, and to the Altar of the Cross, even with humble, broken, contrite Hearts. Such Hearts we might get, if it were not for our Pride: It was therefore prohibited in the Old Law, to use Leaven in God's Sacrifices and Offerings; Leaven was the Emblem of Pride, which makes us unfit to appear before the humble Jesus: *I am broken with their whorish Heart, which hath departed from me*, saith God, Ezek. ix. 6. This was literally fulfilled in Christ: And shall not we share in the Depth of that Sorrow? Shall we see him bow his Head under the Weight of our Offences, and shall not the Burthen appear heavy and insupportable to our Spirits? Shall we see the innocent Lamb weep for our Stubbornness, and be unconcern'd at the Spectacle?

6. *He broke the Bread*, to let us see how ready he is to comfort the contrite and broken Heart. Christian, as great as the Agonies were, thy Sins did put him to; as great as the Torments were, he felt upon thy Account; as bitter as the Death was, he suffered and tasted for thee; yet, if thy Soul relents, and if that which made him die, becomes loathsome and abominable in thy Sight, if a deep Sense of thy Unworthiness fills the Channels of thy Heart, if the Fountain of thy Head runs with Water, if thine Eyes gush out in  
Tears,



Tears, if the Weight of thy Sins presses thy Soul into an holy Self-aborrency, if his Passion can fright thy Sins into a languishing Condition, abate their Courage, and break their sturdy Necks, and his broken Body prove a Motive strong enough, and obliges thee to break loose from the Government of Hell; behold, those very Wounds thou madest shall be thy Balsam; and the Blood thy Sins did spill, shall turn into Oyl, to supple thy broken Bones; with that precious Liquor thy Soul shall be washed, and that which was his Death, shall be thy Life and Antidote; with that Offering of himself, once made, he will expiate thy Filth, and perfume thy Services, render them acceptable to God, give thee a Right to Heaven, comfort thee in all thy Tribulations, and call to thy Soul, *Be of good Cheer, thy Sins are forgiven thee.*

7. *He broke the Bread*, to let us know that his Death would break the Wrath of God, allay his Anger, pacify his Justice, and satisfy for the Affront his Holiness had suffer'd from the Sins of Men, and make way for the Penitent's Admission to God's Bosom. This is *S. Bernard's* Observation, and the Mystery is rational; for by his Death he broke the Power of him who had the Power of Death, Heb. ii. 14. This was the Devil, who got that Power by Man's Apostacy, which provok'd the Almighty's Wrath, and mov'd him to permit the Enemy to exercise that Power over Mankind; who was therefore not only the Cause of *Adam's* Death, but of all the Deaths that follow'd that; for which Cause *Christ* called him a *Murderer from the Beginning*, Joh. viii. 44. And the *Jews* style him the *Angel of Death*; and if any extraordinary Judgments were inflicted on Men at any time, he was still the Executioner. Besides all this, he had Power given him to fright Men with Death, either Violent or Natural, and the dreadful Consequences of it; of all which, Man's Apostacy was the Cause. This Power given him by the Justice and Wrath of God, against the Sins of Man, was broken by the Death of *Jesus*, who thereby gave all

all true Believers Power and Courage to undervalue these Fears and Terrors, to look upon them as Bugbears, and Things to fright Slaves withall, since this wonderful Death brings Life, and Pardon, and Salvation to their Souls, and makes their own Death a Passage to the full Possession of the Joys to come.

8. *He broke the Bread*, prophetically to foretell what Miracle would happen at his Death, how the Veil of the Temple would rend, the Rocks break, and the Graves burst their Bonds, and open, even then, when Men's Hearts would be harder than Flints, more impenetrable than Stones, more insensible than Adamants, less tractable than the Earth, more rigid than the Grave, and less relenting than inanimate Creatures.

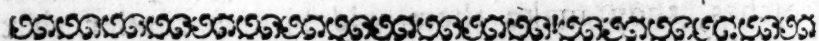
9. *He broke the Bread* : Why may not we think that hereby he signified the Breaches and Divisions, that through the Passions and various Interests of Men, would happen in future Ages in the Church, upon the Account of this Sacrament ? What Strife, what Bitterness, what Contentions hath this Ordinance occasion'd betwixt the *Eastern* and *Western Churches* ; and in the *Western*, betwixt the *Papists* and *Protestants* ; and among the *Protestants*, betwixt the *Lutherans* and those that call themselves of the *Reformed Religion* ? Upon which Account, I cannot but think of the bitter Language that both *Luther* and his Followers have given to the *Zwinglians* and *Calvinists*, that differ'd from them in Opinion about the Supper of the Lord. Nor did the Fury stop here, but in many Places where any of the *Zwinglians* were, they were turn'd out, imprison'd, harass'd, expell'd, driven into Exile, and forc'd away to Sea in a severe Winter, in Frost and Snow, when the Winds blew hard, and the Weather was exceeding tempestuous ; and all, because they would not abjure these six Propositions : 1. *That these Words, Take, eat, this is my Body ; and Take, drink, this is my Blood, must not be understood literally, but typically and figuratively.* 2. *That the Elements in the Lord's*  
Supper

Supper are only Signs and Symbols; and that Christ's Body is as far removed from the Bread in the Sacrament, as Heaven is from Earth. 3. That Christ is present in this Sacrament by his Vertue and Power, and not with his Body; as the Sun, with his Light and Operation, assists and refreshes the Creatures of God in this lower World. 4. That the Bread in the Sacrament is the Emblem and Figure of Christ's Body, and signifies, and represents only. 5. That Christ's Body is eaten only by Faith mounting up into Heaven, not with the Mouth. 6. That only true Believers do properly eat Christ's Body; but wicked Men, who have no lively Faith, receive nothing but the bare Bread and Wine. Those that would not abjure these Doctrines, were used like Hereticks, Fanaticks and Vagabonds: By their Usage, one would have taken them to have been guilty of Sacrilege, Murder, Robbery, Sedition, Rebellion, &c. but the chief Crime, it seems, was, because having imbibed Zwinglius and Calvin's Doctrine about the *Eucharist*, they could not conform to the *Lutheran* Persuasion in that Point. Wonderful Barbarity! which one would scarce have expected from *Heathens*, much less from *Christians* and *Fellow-Protestants*, who, together with them, protested against the Corruptions of the Church of *Rome*. Into such an unseemly Behaviour do Men precipitate themselves, when they let loose the Reins of their Passions; instead of becoming Repairers of Breaches, they make them wider, and render that Wound incurable, which, if wise, impartial and charitable Men had the handling of, might be heal'd up with great Facility.

III. It was, indeed, a Rule in the Rubrick of the Passover, *Exod. xii. 46.* that a Bone of the *Paschal Lamb* should not be broken; but that Type doth not interfere with Christ's breaking the Sacramental Bread: For, though the *Paschal Lamb* represented the Lamb of God, which was to die for the Sins of the World, yet that particular Rite had Relation only to that



Providence in the Scene of Christ's Passion ; in which, Care was taken that his Legs should not be broken, as those of Malefactors commonly were, as St. *John* expressly explains it, *Joh. xix. 21.* And this shews the wonderful Exactness of Providence, that both foretold and fulfilled that Particular in our great Redeemer's Funeral : And though he was numbred with the Transgressors, yet, in many Things, his Usage was different from theirs, to let the World see that a special Dispensation attended him, and that, in the midst of all his Misery, an unknown Hand restrain'd the unruly Wills of Men, and made them, against their Intent and Design, correspond with God's Prescience and Determination. This was so minute a Circumstance, that one would have thought it deserved no Cognizance, or Prediction : But, as inconsiderable as it appears to vulgar Eyes, God knew it was of Consequence ; and hereby he taught future Ages, at once to admire the Treasures of his Wisdom, and his Care of his only begotten Son ; who though he condescended to die so ignominious a Death, yet was to enjoy this Privilege above other Malefactors, that even Infidels might see he was no common Creature. So that this Rite in the Passover must be stretched no farther than it was at first intended ; and if so, it clashes not with Christ's breaking the Bread for other Designs and Purposes.



*The Preceding Considerations reduc'd to Practice.*

I. **S**ince *Christ* broke the Bread, and the Act is so significant, the Church of *Rome* is certainly in the Wrong, who neglects this Breaking, and gives the Wafer whole. But we need not wonder at their Neglect of this Practice in their Rituals, who have made bold with the one Half of the Sacrament, and deprive the Laity of an essential Part of it, viz. the Cup ; whereof

whereof we shall have Occasion to speak more largely in the Sequel. Men who are resolv'd to establish their Errors, into which Ignorance first led them, must be bold and daring; and, since the Word of God doth contradict them, invent and erect an Authority equal with that of God, and set up an infallible Chair, to bear the World in hand, that they can do nothing that is unlawful; and while Oral Tradition, that Nose of Wax, which you may turn and set which way you list, is pretended, there is no Doctrine so absurd, but may be water'd from that impure Spring: And who can question it, when the Laity are kept ignorant of the Word of the Living God, and the Scriptures as much forbidden as the Tree of Life was to *Adam*, lest he should eat thereof, and live.

II. As *Christ* broke the Bread, so it is justly supposed that he did eat of it Himself; for this was the Custom among the *Jews*, for the Master of the Family, who broke the Bread, to eat of it himself: And tho' he had no need of it, and the Mercy intended by this Sacrament, was intended altogether for the Benefit of his Disciples and Followers, yet as he was baptized to shew a good Example, and that he might be in all Things like unto his Brethren, so he did eat of the Sacramental Bread, thereby to encourage all Christians to come and participate of that blessed Symbol. And we may add, he did it, to shew, that those that did eat worthily had Communion with him, and that he would be in them, and they in him; as those who are admitted to eat of the same Meat the Prince himself eats of, are supposed to be his Favourites. But if *Christ* did eat of the consecrated Bread himself, the Doctrine of Transubstantiation, that Idol of the Church of *Rome*, falls to the Ground: For from hence it will follow, that *Christ* did eat and devour himself; which as it is absurd, so it wants very little of being ridiculous.

III. See here what Reflexions thou art to make when thou seest the Holy Bread broken before thine Eyes in this Sacrament. This thou must not look upon as an empty Ceremony, but thy Soul must flee away to *Getsemane*, walk about *Golgotha*, take a turn on the *Mount of Olives*, and stand still a while on *Moriah*, and behold how the innocent *Isaac* is bound upon the Altar, how the Son of God hangs on the infamous Tree, a Spectacle to Angels, and to Men: And here the tremendous Object must arrest thy Thought, and infuse such Reflexions: See here, my Sins, what Work ye have made, what Injury ye have done! The Son of the Living God could not be quiet for you in Heaven; ye pulled him down from the Mansions of Glory; ye afflicted, persecuted, broke him here on Earth, and left him not till ye had killed and murdered him! How shall I be revenged upon you? How shall I testify my Concernedness at the Sufferings of the Lord Jesus? How shall I convince the Holy Angels that stand about me, that I condole with him? Pride and Desire of *Kain* Glory, thou shalt die; Envy and Malice, thou shalt live no longer in my Soul; Wrath and Anger, thou shalt be d'spatch'd; Hypocrisie and Covetousness, thou shalt be broke to Pieces; Intemperance and Luxury, thou shalt breathe thy last: I'll harbour no Murderers in my Bosom, no such Traitors shall lodge in my House. O Blessed Master! Shall I see thy Head broke with Thorns, and not cry out, O that my Head were Water, and my Eyes a Fountain of Tears! Shall I see thy Face broke with Grief, and not blush at my daring Sins that broke it thus? Break, stubborn Heart! Break, my perverse and ungovernable Will! Break, my Head-strong Passions! O Jesu, break these Cockatrice's Eggs, and let all the Poyson evaporate; then, then, thy Servant shall be whole.

IV. Hear this, thou broken, thou contrite Penitent: Hear this, thou distressed Soul, that are broken with a Sense of Sin, who feelest the Burthen heavy, and bowest under it: Behold the Rock that was broken for



for thee; and of the Waters that flow from it, drink; yea, drink abundantly: This Water is cordial, thou needest not be afraid of Intemperance here. Hide thyself in the Holes, in the Clefts of this Rock; either flee for Refuge: When Devils haunt thee, when Temptations follow thee; when Despair, like the Avenger of Blood, is at thy Heels, run into this City of Refuge, save thyself in this *Zoar*; here fear no Storm, no Waves, no Tempest; here all travelling and weary Souls find rest; here Devils have no Power, for they are conquer'd, their Dominion is taken away, their Empire broken; here is Balm of *Gilead*; here lies the Physician, whose Blood is for the Healing of the Nations; here fix, though the Earth be moved; here shelter thyself from the Wrath to come. *Christ*, the same Yesterday, to Day, and for ever, will open Rivers in High Places, and Fountains in the midst of Vallies: When the Poor and Needy seek for Water, and there is none. He, Prince of Peace, will hear them; He, the mighty God, will not forsake them; He will plant in the Wilderness the Cedar, the Myrtle, and the Oyl-Tree; He will set in the Desert the Fir-Tree, and the Pine, and the Box-Tree together, that they may see, and know, and consider and understand together, that the Hand of the Lord hath done this, and the Holy One of Israel hath created it, Ezek. xli. 16, 17.

*The P R A Y E R.*

O Blessed and crucified Saviour! How often have I broke with Thee! How often have I broke loose from Thee! How often have I broke the Silken Strings whereby Thou hast sought to tye my Soul! How justly mightest Thou turn Thy Face away from me! How justly mightest Thou look upon me as unworthy to be called any more to this Spiritual Feast!

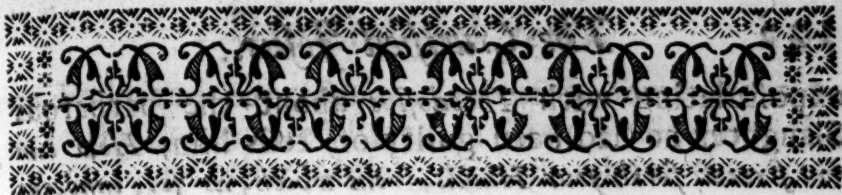
But remember, Lord! remember I am Dust, remember my Frailty, and do not shut up Thy tender Mercies in Displeasure. O call after this Prodigal, and bring him home again to his Father's House: Make lively Impressions of Thy Crucifixion upon my Mind: Let the Torments of Thy broken Body fright me from all known Sin: Whenever I am tempted to any Thing that is Evil, cry in mine Ears, or possess me with this Thought, That that very Sin did help to break Thee on the Cross! A lively Apprehension of this, will keep my Soul undefiled; this will break and crush my former Delight in Vanity; this will embitter my sensual Pleasures; this will make me weary of Running after other Gods; this will humble my Soul; this will subdue the vain Imaginations, whereby I have been wont to flatter myself into Misery. O give me a View of the Riches that are to be found in Thy broken Body, that I may run no longer after broken Cisterns, and may rely no longer on broken Reeds. O let my Soul feed on Thy broken Body by Contemplation: Thou didst not count Thy Life dear for my Sake; O let me be touch'd with these Thoughts, that I may despise Death and Torments for Thy Sake, and may, with all Saints and Martyrs, behold Thy Face at last in Eternal Glory. O Jesu! Great Store-house of Delight! Who hast the Keys of *David*! Spread open Thine Arms of Mercy, and receive this poor miserable Creature; behold, this straying Sheep, beset with Multitudes of Wolves, runs to the Good Shepherd: Protect

me from the fiery Darts of the Enemy; embrace me, as a tender Mother doth her sickly Child, with Bowels of Mercy. Kill in me the base Desires of the Flesh; and whatever evil Inclinations Thou spiest in me, root them up. Extinguish in me the impure Flames of Lust. Give me an excellent Spirit, a Spirit active in the Practice and Exercise of Vertue. Raise the Powers of my Soul by Thy Love, that I may love Thee with all my Heart, that I may praise Thee, that I may honour Thee, and think Nothing tedious or troublesome that may promote Thy Glory. Repair this shatter'd Tabernacle, and vouchsafe to dwell in it: I have wilfully ruin'd it by my Sins, O make it whole again. Remove the Poyson which hath infected all my Faculties. Destroy the Serpent's Seed, that lurks in the secret Corners of my Heart. If *Adam* could not preserve his Integrity in the State of Innocence, how shall I preserve mine in this State of Corruption, without Thy special Grace and Assistance? Thy Grace is the Treasure I want, Thou hast promised it, I beg it; O let me not go without it. O Jesu! Thou didst love me when I was Thine Enemy, O hate me not now that I am made Thy Friend. When I was lost, Thou didst redeem me with Thy Blood; now that I am found, O wash me with that Blood: O let me not perish now, when Heaven is bought, and an endless Bliss is purchased for me. Now that the Hand-Writing against me is blotted out, let me not run into new Dangers, nor forfeit that Blessing which is so graciously



tender'd to me. It is the real Desire of my Soul to serve Thee; and, O that I might do it with Chearfulness, with Alacrity, with Fervency, and with Constancy! The Preparation of the Heart is of Thee, Thou givest the Will; O give me Strength to do, what I desire. What can I do of myself? I am naturally defiled, Original Sin sticks to me, Proneness to Evil follows me; Thou must stop the Current; Nothing but Thyself can dry up this Fountain of Corruption; it is Thy Work: And whatever Good is in me, from Thee it comes, from Thy Grace it doth proceed. Let the same Mercy uphold me, that hath hitherto guided me; and guide me so through the Briars and Thorns of Temptations, that I may not only be more than a Conqueror through Him that loved me, but may at last receive the Crown and Recompence of such as overcome. *Amen, Amen.*





## CH A P. X.

Of taking the Consecrated Bread with our Hands, and the Mystery of it.

### The CONTENTS.

*In the Primitive Church, the Eucharist was always taken with the Hand: This Simplicity, in Progress of Time, abandon'd; and, as the Veneration of External Symbols advanced, the Bread received in certain Vessels, and sometimes upon Linnen Cloth. The Superstition of the Church of Rome, of putting the Bread into the Mouth of the Communicant, laid open, and the Vanity of it shewn. The Mystery of Taking the Eucharist with our Hands, set down in three Particulars, viz. To put us in mind, with what Alacrity we are to accept of the Mercy offer'd us, to testify our appropriating of that Mercy to ourselves, and to hold it fast when we have received it. Of God's Liberality, in bidding us take the best Gift he hath to bestow. The Impiety of those that take Christ for their Redeemer, and continue disobedient, discovered. The Prayer.*

**I**S certain that Christ said, *Take and eat;* which the Primitive Church understood of taking the consecrated Elements with the Hand. And to this purpose saith *Tertullian*, *We receive the Eucharist from none, but from the Hands of the President or Minister of the Ordinance.* It was for this Reason, that in the ancient *Liturgies*, the Deacons cried to the People, or Communicants, *Extend your Hands:* And upon this Account it was, that *St. Ambrose*, ex-  
postulating

expostulating with *Theodosius* about the barbarous Slaughter he had been guilty of, tells him, *How can you stretch forth your Hands, from which, as yet, innocent Blood drops down? How can you, with such Hands, receive the Body of the Lord?* Nor do even the Papists themselves, who will not suffer the Lay-Communicant to touch the Wafer with his Hand, but put it into his Mouth, deny it. Whether every one in the Ancient Church did take the consecrated Elements with his own, from the Priest's or Deacon's Hand; or whether they took it out of the Dish, into which the sacred Bread was broken, with their own Hands, is not very material to determine: Tho' whatever Passages there may be in *Clement of Alexandria*, and *St. Cyprian*, which seem to import that the Communicants did take the broken Bread out of the Dish; yet most of the Ancients do agree, that the consecrated Elements were taken from the Hands of Ecclesiastical Persons: And tho', among the *Jews*, the Master of the Family, that broke the Bread, did not always give it into the Hands of every Guest, but having broke it, laid upon the Table, and every one took a Piece; yet the Practice of the Christian Church, for Six Hundred Years at least, after *Christ*, sufficiently shews how the Holy Apostles took it; whom, we may suppose, the first Churches did imitate: And as the Disciples took it from *Christ's* Hands, so the Communicants afterwards took it from the Apostles and their Successors Hands; which Practice continues this Day in most Churches of the Protestants, that call themselves *Reformed*: I say, in most; for in some, and particularly those of the *United Provinces*, the Communicants take it out of the Dish, after it is broken by the Minister. It was Ignorance and Superstition that brought in a contrary Custom: and from hence arose that Canon in the

Can. 36. Council of *Antisiodorum*, celebrated about the Year after *Christ* 613. *That Women must not take the Eucharist with their bare Hands, but in a Linnen Cloth, which they call'd Dominicale.* Soon after,

as



as Folly and Superstition increased, some began to take the Consecrated Bread in little Vessels of Gold, or of some other Metal; against whom the Sixth Council of *Constantinople*, about the Year of our Lord 676, made a Canon, and forbad them to do so for the future, but to put their Hands cross-wise, and so to receive it. The Pretence in receiving the Holy Bread in some thing, besides their bare Hands, was, that they might not defile the Body of *Christ* with their Hands, as if touching it with baser Things than their own Hands, would be more acceptable to God: For, as *Solomon* tells us, *A living Dog is better than a dead Lion*; so we may with far greater Reason say, That a living Hand is infinitely better than all the dead Things which are made, either of Gold, or Silver, or Brass, or any other Mineral. But tho' these Abuses crept in so early, yet the Custom of receiving the Holy Bread with their Hands continued in abundance of Churches, till the latter End of the Ninth Century, by which time it began to be customary in the *Western Church* to put the *Eucharist* into the Mouths of the Communicants, as it is practised this Day in the *Roman Church*, as also among the *Lutheran Protestants*. It is confessed, that a Canon was made in a Council of *Roan*, about the Year of our Lord 685, *That the Eucharist should, for the future, by the Priest be put into the Mouth of the Communicant, whether Woman or Layman*: Yet there are sufficient Testimonies extant, that assure us, that this Canon was not observed every where, till about the latter End of the Ninth Century. In a word, as Superstition grew, and the Doctrine of *Transubstantiation* began to prevail, so this ancient Rite of taking the *Eucharist* with the Hand, was abolish'd; and the Priests of the Church of *Rome* would not so much as suffer Laymen to touch the Sacramental Bread with the Tip of their Fingers, pretending that it was only given by Christ

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into the Hands of Priests; an Absurdity so great, that by the same Rule it would follow, that the Laity must be totally excluded from the Sacrament, because, at the first Institution, it was receiv'd by none but Priests. Nay, to that height of Folly did Men arise by Degrees, not only *Papists*, but many also that professed the Purity of the Gospel, that it was counted a great Profanation of the *Eucharist*, if the People did any way touch the Sacred Bread; and therefore great Care was, and is still taken, even at this Day, that the Bread be put exactly upon the Tongue of the Communicant, that he may not touch it so much as with his Teeth: So that under a Pretence of Religion, Men are made to forbear that, which true Religion commands to be done. And what an Injury is it to the People, to hinder them from touching and taking the Holy Bread in their Hands, when *Christ* laid down his Life for them, as well as for the Priests? Did the Priests receive greater Benefit by Christ's Death than the People? Or, were some peculiar Advantages consign'd to them by his Death, over and above what is intended for the Laity? If this could be prov'd, there might be some Colour for this Pretence: But when all equally share in his Mercies, why should not all take the Bread in their Hands, whereby they remember the Benefits of his Death? Are the Priest's Hands holier or cleaner than the People's? Would to God they were so, not only in this Sacrament, but in all Things! But, after all, what can be more weak or silly, than to imagine that Holy Bread is defil'd more by the Hands and Teeth, than by the Tongue, or Bowels, or Stomach, which receive it? Is not the Tongue a Member of the Body, as well as the Hand? Or, are the Bowels, into which the Bread is received, purer than the Hands? If it be said, that by the Hands great Sins are usually committed, I would fain know whether greater Sins are not daily committed with the Tongue, than with the Hand? So impertinent is this Plea, that it deserves

no Argument, or Answer. In the *Fac. Goat in Nor.*  
*ad Miss. Chrysost.*  
 Greek Church, the Custom of taking the Holy Bread with the Hand, was kept up for many Hundred Years, till of late they have got a way of mingling the Holy Wine with the Bread in a Spoon, whence the Communicants do take it.

H. As we are commanded to take the Holy Bread with our Hands, which makes it no indifferent Thing; so we cannot suppose that Christ would command it, without intending some Mystery in that Action; and if it be lawful to guess, we may piously believe, that by that taking, he intended these following Things.

I. It puts us in mind, with what Alacrity we should accept of the unspeakable Gift, viz. The Mercy of Reconciliation, by the Death of Christ Jesus: As we readily stretch forth our Hands to receive a Present that is pleasing to us, so ought we to accept of what a merciful God doth so freely and so frankly bestow upon us. Accept of it! You will say, Who can be supposed to refuse it? Will a Malefactor scruple to accept of his Prince's Pardon? Or, if a King puts a Treasure into a poor Prisoner's Hands, will he scorn it, or withdraw his Hand? 'Tis true; Men are willing enough to accept of a Saviour, so they may have him upon their own Terms: If he will give them Leave to do what they please, and then save them, they are most ready to take, and to embrace him. But that is not the Acceptance I mean: For such an Acceptance implies a Contradiction, as being contrary to the whole Design of that Reconciliation: For by his Death, he was to destroy the Works of the Devil; and therefore to accept of him, and to cleave to those Works he came to destroy, is to set Christ at Variance with himself. He that accepts of this Gift, must express that Acceptance, not only by his Hand, but his Heart too, and conform also to the Ensign of that Gift.



Gift. For, *Is Christ divided?* Shall I accept of a Part, and not of the Whole? Shall I receive him as a Saviour, and not as a Guide and Rule too? Shall I stretch forth my Hand, to put his Sceptre of Grace and Mercy to my Lips, and break the Sceptre when I have done? This is impious, and unreasonable.

2. We take the Holy Bread with our Hands, to testify our Approbation of that Gift, and that we take it to our own Use and Benefit; as he that takes Food in his Hand, doth it to feed his own Body, and to strengthen himself. And, indeed, Christ is willing, that the Soul that comes to this Holy Table should say, Christ is mine, for me he suffered, for me he died, for my Sake he left Heaven, and confin'd himself to a Cradle, to a Stable, to a Manger: For me he was nail'd to the Cross, for me that precious Sacrifice was offer'd, and I share in all the Benefits of his Death, as well as my Brother, my Sister, my Friend, and my Neighbour: The Estate he purchased belongs to me, I have a Right to it, as well as *S. Paul* and *S. Peter*, as well as *Zacheus* and *Mary Magdalen*: And there is no Dispute of it, where the Communicant brings with him *Mary Magdalen's* Tears, *S. Peter's* Repentance, *S. Paul's* Admiration of God's Love, and *Zacheus's* Charity, he may be as confident that Christ gives himself to him, as if he heard Christ saying to him with an audible Voice, in the Prophet's Language, *Fear not, I have redeemed thee, thou art mine*: He may justly believe he hears Christ saying to him, *Here, Christian, take that which is thine own, even myself, that Pardon, that Salvation, that Peace, that Joy, that Spirit, that Comfort, which my Death hath purchased, and my Cross hath gained. I am thy Portion, and all that I have is thine; I am thy Shield, and thy exceeding great Reward*: Be not afraid to apply these mighty Blessings to my Soul; for as great, as wonderful, as rich, as magnificent, as they are, and as poor, as mean, as wretched, and as naked as thou art, take them and wear them, tye them as a Crown about thy Head: Look upon the bright, the everlasting Mansions  
of

of Bliss and Happiness; look upon all that Saints and Angels do enjoy, and please thyself with the Thoughts of it; for all is thine.

3. We are commanded to take the Holy Bread with our Hands, to let us know, that *having accepted of this Gift, and appropriated it to ourselves, we are to hold it fast,* and not to let it go again. Then we let Christ go, when we grow cold in our Love to him, and to his distressed Members, or to our Brethren in general. Love stays that Bridegroom of our Soul, Love preserves his gracious Presence, Love chains him to our Hearts. It was an excellent Resolution of the *Spiritual Spouse*, and that Spouse are we, *Cant. iii. 3, 4. The Watchmen that go about the City found me; to whom I said, Saw ye him whom my Soul loves? It was but a little that I passed from them, but I found him whom my Soul loves. I held him, and would not let him go, untill I had brought him into my Mother's House, and into the Chamber of her that conceiv'd me.* This must be the Resolution of every Soul that is tender of spiritual Comfort. The Way to hold him fast, is, to kiss him with our Thoughts, to embrace him with our Minds, to cleave to him with our Affections, to cling to him with our Will, and to caress him with our Obedience: If he would go away from us, these are the Charms that hold him: And the Soul that, with *David*, hath Courage to say, and sincerely intends what it says, *Psal. xviii. 1. I will love thee, O Lord, my Strength, my Rock, my Fortrefs, my Deliverer, my Buckler, and the Horn of my Salvation, and my high Tower,* may expect as gracious an Answer. The same we read of, *Psal. xci. 14, 15, 16. Because he hath set his Love upon me, therefore I will deliver him: I will set him on high, because he hath known my Name: He shall call upon me, and I will answer him, I will be with him in Trouble, I will deliver him, and honour him: With long Life will I satisfy him, and shew him my Salvation.*

*The Preceding Considerations reduced to Practice.*

I. **H**ERE we may take a View of the immense Bounty of our Master, to his Church and People. Our Saviour pathetically describes it, *Mar. xii. 1---7.* For, according to the different Conditions of his Church, he sent various Servants to check them, to admonish them, to warn them, to represent to them the Joys and Torments of another World; and though not a few of these Servants were persecuted, stoned, killed, abused, and some met with cruel Mockings, with Bonds and Imprisonments, yet that did not discourage him; and having therefore yet one Son, his Well-beloved, he sent him also last unto them, saying, *They will reverence my Son:* And this Son he bids us take; and with him, all Things that can make us truly happy. And though it is true, the covetous and sensual Man would have taken it more kindly, if God had bid him take Chests of Gold, and Talents of Silver, rich Houses, and richer Lands; yet had those Gifts been very mean, and unworthy of his Wisdom and Holiness. His Gift, like himself, must be Spiritual and Great; and in bidding us take his Son, with all the Benefits of his Death, he bids us take the most inestimable Mercy, and that which must make us rich, and great, and glorious, to Eternal Ages. If he had bid us take the World, and the Fulness thereof, there had been no great Self-denial in that Offer: But to offer the Son of his Love, and to bid us take him as our own, whereby we enjoy all his Wealth and Treasures, the Self-denial is so great, that the Sacred Writers knew not how to express it, and therefore use such Words as may serve to feed our Admiration; *So God loved the World, that he gave his only begotten Son:* And the Word *so* implies so vast an Ocean of Love, that the Understanding both of Angels and Men may lose themselves in the Contemplation or Survey of it.

II. Here



II. Here I cannot but reflect on the Rudeness of some that take him indeed, but it is as the Soldiers at his Passion took him, *by Force and Violence*. There are Thousands that will take him for their Saviour, whether he will or no: Though he hath protested that he will say to those who would not do the Will of his Father which is in Heaven, *I know ye not, depart from me, ye Workers of Iniquity*; yet these very Persons will lay hold on him, and will be sav'd by him, in Despight of him; and therefore do not only assemble with other Christians, under the Cross, at the Holy Table, and there pretend to take him to their Comfort as well as the best of them; but on their Death-beds too, after they have abused him by their carnal and sensual Lives, liv'd like his Enemies, lean upon him, depend upon him, lay hold on his Merits, support themselves with his Sufferings, and stay themselves on him, as if they were resolv'd he should not shake them off: This is a Rudeness that admits of no Excuse. Not but that he is ready enough to refresh those that lay hold on him as they should do; but where Mens Hearts remain un-sanctified, unholy, unresolved to walk in the Light, as he was in the Light, unaffected with the Love of God, untouch'd with a Sense of Sin; there to hope, and be confident they shall be saved by his Merits, is to make Christ a Patron of their Sins, and an Encourager of Hypocrisie, and to charge him with a Lye, as if, contrary to what he had so often affirmed, asserted, repeated, and confirmed by Miracles too, not those that have followed him in the Regeneration, but those whose Hearts and Lives were never chang'd, shall sit upon Thrones when the Son of Man shall sit upon the Throne of his Glory, *Matt. xix. 28.*

III. From hence it is evident, that to take Christ for our highest and chiefest Good, a Man must believe there is something to be got by him, which the World cannot give, and beyond all that the World can afford:

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And this Belief must not be slight or superficial, but a Belief that considers the Consequence and Importance of this Truth; not a Belief of Speculation, but a Belief that rouses the Soul from her Slumber. A Man that doth not heartily believe, that the greatest, the best, the choicest Satisfaction flows from the Possession of his Treasure, will never labour, or toil, or put himself to Trouble to get Possession of it. So that, if ever we take the Lord *Jesus*, according to the Rules laid down in the preceding Discourse, so as to accept of him upon his Terms, to appropriate him to ourselves, and to hold him fast, we must sit down, and in cool Blood consider, whether that Bliss and Happiness is to be found in him, which the Scripture speaks of, and to weigh that Happiness, how far it transcends all other Felicities and Comforts of this World; and not to rest, till we are fully persuaded of the Truth and Reality of it: And this Persuasion will in a manner force and compel us to take him so, as, with the Merchant in the Gospel, to sell all we have for that inestimable Pearl.

*The P R A Y E R.*

O *Jesu*! My All, my Sun, my Light, and the Glory of my Soul! Who hast taken upon Thee the Form of a Servant, that I might be taken into the Number of the Kings and Princes of the other World! I have too long entertain'd myself with the Pleasures and Vanities of the World, and the uncertain Shadows and Images of Carnal Satisfaction. I see, I see, there is that in Thee, which counter-balances and out-weighs all that the World can call rich, and excellent, and beautiful: They that enjoy Thee, walk in Light, and the Darkness troubles them not. O take my

my Soul, and reform it ; take my Will, and rectify it ; take my Understanding, and eradicate it with Thy Beams ; take my Affections, and inflame them. O let me not take Shadows any longer for Realities : Take me into Thy School, and teach me ; teach me, how I may be Thy Disciple ; teach me, how I may be satisfied with Thee alone ; teach me, how I shall take Thee for my Head, my Governour, and the Regent of my Soul. Take Care of this poor, miserable Sinner ; take Thou the Government of my Heart : It is Thine, Thou hast bought, Thou hast redeemed it, Thou hast paid the Ransom. Take me Captive by Thy Love : Free me from the Prison of my Corruptions, that I may be fit to be taken into the Number of such as have washed their Robes, and made them white in the Blood of the Lamb, and stand for ever before the Throne of God, and serve Him Night and Day in His Temple. *Amen.*





## CHAP. XI.

Of these Words, *This is my Body*, whether they import a Transubstantiation or Consubstantiation; and how the Bread is Christ's Body; and how Christ's Body may, and is to be eaten.

### The CONTENTS.

*Transubstantiation a new and monstrous Doctrine. The Fate that attended Berengarius, for denying it. The Impossibility of it shewn in several Particulars. Consubstantiation an Opinion as groundless as the former. The History of it. The Arguments the Lutheran Churches make use of, confuted. The true Sense of these Words, THIS IS MY BODY. What it is to eat Christ's Body. Many Rhetorical Expressions in the Fathers, concerning this Holy Sacrament, which are not to be taken literally. The same Expressions made use of still, but to be understood according to the Analogy of Faith. The same Way that Man was lost, the same Way he must recover. The crucified Body of Christ, represented in this Sacrament, a Motive to many excellent Duties. The Prayer.*

I. **T**HIS IS MY BODY: What Stirs and Differences these few Words have caused in the Christian World, especially since the Eighth Century, is unknown to none that is versed in Ecclesiastical History: The Modern Church of Rome, as they place Consecration in these Words, so, to establish Transubstantiation, they take Sanctuary at this Expression. Transubstantiation, a Word not known till the Year of our Lord 1112, when Stephen Bp of Autun first invent-

ed it, and afterwards confirm'd by Pope *Innocent III.* in the *Lateran Council*, in the Year 1215, is at this Day the darling Doctrin of the Church of Rome: A Word, first brought in by Passion and Ignorance, defended afterwards with blind Zeal, and at last establish'd, and turn'd into an Article of Faith, by the pack'd Council of *Trent*; a Word, which long ago would have been banish'd and rejected, but that it happen'd to be own'd by Men who will rather hazard all, than acknowledge themselves in an Error: A Word, which that corrupted Church at this Day fights for; and anathematizes, curses, and damns to the Pit of Hell all that dissent from their Sense and Meaning in that barbarous Expression. What they mean by *Transubstantiation*, is sufficiently known; viz. A Conversion or Change of the whole Substance of Bread in this Sacrament, into the Substance of Christ's Natural Body, immediately upon the Priest's speaking these Words, *This is my Body*; as soon as the last Syllable *um* in the *Latin* Words, *Hoc enim est Corpus meum*, is pronounc'd by the Priest. If any be desirous of a full Account of this monstrous Doctrin, the best Way to

*Hoc vero nihil aliud est, nec aliter nominari, aut haberi potest, quam magica incantatio, Hosp. Hist. Sacrament. Part 2. p. 103.*

know it, is to view the *Recantation* Pope *Nicolas* forc'd *Berengarius* to subscribe, in the Year of our Lord 1059. which was this: *I Berengarius, an unworthy Deacon of the Church of S. Maurice of Anjou, knowing the true and Apostolick Faith, do renounce and abjure all Heresies; and that particularly for which I have hitherto been infamous, and which teaches, that the Bread and Wine which are set upon the Altar, are only a Sacrament after Consecration, or a Representation, and not the very Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ; and that they cannot sensually, but only in a Sacramental or Representative Way, be handled by the Priest, and broken and bruised by the Teeth of the Faithful. But I do consent to the Holy Roman Church, and to the Apostolick See; and profess with my Lips and Heart, that I hold that Faith concerning the Sacrament*

of the Lord's Table, which our Lord, and Pope Nicolas, and this Holy Synod, have, by Evangelical and Apostolical Authority, commanded to be held, and prescribed to me, viz. That the Bread and Wine which are plac'd upon the Altar after Consecration, are not only a Sacrament, but the very Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ; and are sensually, and not only Sacramentally, but in Truth, handled by the Hands of the Priest, and broken and bruised by the Teeth of the Faithful. And hereunto I swear by the Holy and Individual Trinity, and by these Holy Gospels. This was the gross and absurd Doctrine of the Church of Rome in that Age; so absurd, that even their Champions who came after, were ashamed of it, being sensible that Christ's glorify'd Body could not be handl'd, and bruis'd, and ground with the Teeth. Which made the Glossator on Gratian, reciting this Recantation, say,

Distinct. 2. de Consecr. Can. 74. *If you do not take these Words in a sound Sense, you will fall into greater Here-sie than Berengarius.* Yet the Gentlemen of this Church are past blushing; and tho' there be nothing more inconsistent with the common Principles of Mankind, than this *Transubstantiation*, yet they are resolv'd to maintain that with Noise and Clamour, which they cannot do with Reason and Argument; and tho', as they explain this Doctrine, it be rather an Annihilation of the Bread, or Substitution of Christ's Body, than a *Transubstantiation*, yet a *Transubstantiation* it must be: And that the Vulgar may not stumble at it, abundance of Miracles are invented to support it: How S. Anthony of Padua's Horse forsook his Oats, to do Obeisance to the Body of Christ, or the Wafer, after it was *transubstantiated*: And how others have seen the Wafer bleed, when by Jews and Infidels it hath been prick'd: And how others have seen a Child appear to them, instead of the Wafer: How, upon S. Gregory's Prayers, the Wafer hath been chang'd into substantial bloody Flesh: How a Protestant denying *Transubstantiation*, and saying, that a Spider deserves as much Reverence and Adoration as the Wafer in the Sacrament,



Sacrament, they being both God's Creatures, an huge black Spider immediately spun herself down from the Cieling, into his Mouth, &c. And these Miracles *Bellarmino* brings for *Lib. 3. de Euch. Cap. 8.* Proofs and Arguments. But to examine the Doctrine itself, how impossible it is, that these Words should infer such a Conversion, is evident from hence.

1. Because no Reason can be given, why these Words, *This is my Body*, should infer such a Change, any more than the Words, *Take, eat*: For the one, as well as the other, were spoken by Christ at the same time, and in one Breath.

2. 'Tis impossible that these Words should infer any such Change of the Bread into real and substantial Flesh: For it would follow, that Christ had spoken what was False, and the Disciples that were present, and to whom he spoke these Words, might have easily convinc'd themselves of the contrary. That before Christ's Ascension into Heaven, they had no very Metaphysical Understandings, nor very quick Apprehensions, any one may guess, that hath but read the Evangelical History. They that had been present at so many Miracles Christ wrought, and convinced themselves of the Reality of them by their Senses, that if there had a Miracle been wrought in this Sacrament, they would, without Dispute, have examin'd it by their Senses; and having seen no real Conversion or Change of the Bread before them into his Natural Body, would have disputed Christ's Assertion, and given him an Account of the Reason of their Unbelief: For they had seen the Miracle of his changing Water into Wine, and convinc'd themselves by their Taste and Eye-sight, that there was a real Change wrought; and therefore, if such a miraculous Change had been wrought here, and they could not have perceiv'd it by any of their Senses, can any Man imagine they would have been silent, and not contradicted it? There cannot be a greater Miracle, than to change

Bread into Flesh : And if the Bread, which was before the Disciples, upon the Table, had been changed into Christ's Body, and they had perceiv'd no such Thing by any of their Senses, they would have been amaz'd more than the Virgin *Mary*, at the Message the Angel brought her, of Conceiving without the Knowledge of a Man. They saw Christ sitting at the Table, they saw the Bread in his Hand, they saw the Bread after Consecration, they saw his Body and that Bread were different Things, they did not see him vanish out of their Sight; Christ continued to be as he was, and so did the Bread; and therefore could not but take these Words to be spoken in a spiritual Sense. There was never any Miracle wrought, but what was intended to convince the Senses of Men; and they could either taste, or see, or smell, or feel, or hear it; nay, the Design of a Miracle is clearly lost, if it convinces not the Senses; for the Design is, to surprize, or rather to persuade Men into Belief, by their seeing that, which they cannot but conclude, is wrought by the Finger of God. Except the Senses are convinc'd, the Miracle is wrought in vain : And that so great a Miracle, as changing Bread into Christ's Natural Body, should be wrought, and no Creature be able to perceive it by their Senses, is a Thing so absurd, that it destroys the Nature of a Miracle. *Thomas*, one of the Twelve, who was so difficult in believing Christ's being risen, that he would not give Credit to Eye-Witnesses and his Fellow-Disciples, that had seen him, except he put his Finger in the very Marks of his Nails, and thrust his Hand into his Side; how would he have believed this *Transubstantiation*, if he had not seen the least Appearance of it, or seen the Bread continue Bread, and Christ continue sitting at the Table, as he had done before? Not to mention, that if we must not believe our Senses, what Assurance have we of our Religion, the Stress whereof must be laid upon Christ's Resurrection, and the Apostles and others seeing him risen, after he had been dead? And how can any Man be sure there are  
such

such Words in the Bible, as, *This is my Body*, if he may not believe his Eye-sight?

3. *This is my Body*, differs very much from, *This is Transubstantiated*, or *Changed into my Body*, or *Let it be changed into my Body*: *This is my Body*, speaks what is already in Being; not what may, or shall be effective of something else. *To be*, and *to be changed into* a Thing, are quite different Expressions: And he that says, a Thing *is*, or *hath a Being*, cannot be therefore supposed necessarily to say that it is changed, or transubstantiated, or shall be so; for a Thing may *be* several Ways, besides being changed. That, of which Christ affirms, that *it is his Body*, was the Bread he took in his Hand, or that which he broke; and that may be said to be his Body several Ways, without being changed or transubstantiated into his Body: Which very Thing hath made the wiser and most judicious *Papists* confess, that these Words do not necessarily infer a *Transubstantiation*, without the Decree, Order, and Explication of the Church; upon which they chiefly build their Doctrine and Assertion. And how ridiculous this Explication of their Church is, any common Capacity may perceive, that doth but understand *Grammar*, and the ordinary Way of speaking in all Countries and Languages whatsoever: For what can be more common, than to say, *Such a Man is a Fox*, and *Such a Person is a Lion*, and *Such a Neighbour is a Beast*, and *Such a Boy a Tyger*? But doth any Man of common Sense infer from thence, that such a Person is transubstantiated into a Fox, or Lion, or Tyger? 'Tis true, God can do all Things; but his Power is one Thing, and his Will another; and to believe he will do that which he hath no where said, or promised to do, is notorious Presumption: And tho' we are not presently to reject a Thing, because our Reason cannot comprehend it; yet it is fit that what we cannot comprehend with our Reason, we should be sufficiently assured of, that God hath reveal'd it: Such as is the Mystery of the *Trinity*, the *Incarnation* of our Lord,



Lord, and the future *Resurrection*, &c. And if we had but as good Ground for *Transubstantiation*, as we have for these Mysteries, not only God's exprefs Revelation, but the constant Doctrine of the Church, no wise Man would dispute it. *Transubstantiation* is a Thing, which neither the Scripture, nor the Primitive Church, did ever acknowledge: And there being Nothing in the Word of God to establish it, and being, besides, contrary to all Sense and Reason, we must be first *given up to believe a Lye*, as some Men, it seems, are, *2 Theff. ii. 11.* before we can give Assent unto it. It were endless to repeat here all the Contradictions and Absurdities that this Doctrine may be charged with; for Mice and Vermin will eat the consecrated Wafer, if it lies in their Way: It destroys not only the Nature of Christ's Body, but a principal Article of our Belief too; which saith, That *Christ is ascended, and sitteth at the Right Hand of God; whom the Heavens must receive, untill the Time of the Restitution of all Things, Act. iii. 21.* Not to mention, that the Apostle calls this Bread in the Sacrament, even after Consecration, Bread still, *1 Cor. xi.* And that this Doctrine crosses the Nature of a Sacrament, and is confuted by Christ's saying, *Do this in Remembrance of me*; which supposes that he is absent as to his Body, which was crucified, &c. Nor will that place, *Joh. vi. 55. My Flesh is Meat indeed, and my Blood is Drink indeed*, do any great Service to our Adversaries in this Controversy: For if it be *Meat indeed*, How doth that infer that the Bread must needs be transubstantiated into his Flesh, since his Flesh may be Meat indeed several Ways? For, to all true Believers, that take Comfort in his Death, and are released from Sin, and the Snares of the Devil, by his Flesh that was nailed to the Cross, he may be truly said to be *Meat indeed*, and *Drink indeed*, because their Souls are comforted by the Remembrance of it, and preserved to eternal Life; and tho' he be only spiritual Meat to them, yet he is so *indeed*, and *really*, and in a very good Sense: As we say  
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of a comfortable Word, Spoken to a troubled Conscience, That that *Word* is Meat and Drink to it indeed, and doth it more good than all the Meat and Drink in the World would have done: And that all that Discourse, *Joh. vi.* is to be understood of Spiritual Meat and Drink, whereby the Soul receives Comfort and Refreshment, *Christ* himself hath declar'd, *Joh. vi. 63.*

II. As these Words, *This is my Body*, do not infer a *Transubstantiation*, so neither do they import a *Consubstantiation*, a Word as hard as the former, and which hath been taken up by the *Lutheran Protestants*, to express their Opinion, that *Christ's* glorified Body is *in, with, and under* the Element of the Bread in the Holy Sacrament, or hid under it; a Doctrine which they ground upon the Ubiquity of *Christ's* Body, or being every where, and in all Places; which Privilege, they fanſie, was communicated to *Christ's* Human Nature, by its being join'd with the *Divine*; a Thing so irrational, that hereby they confound the Divine Nature with the Human: And to say, that *Christ* had a Body, which, as all other Bodies, must have Dimensions, Height, and Breadth, and Depth, and Length, and yet to make that Body every where present, is a Conclusion so weak, that I am apt to believe, that if it had not been pitch'd upon by *Luther*, in a Heat, or Passion, he would never have embraced it. For, indeed, this was the Infirmary of that excellent Man, who, though otherwise very much mortified in his Desires after the Riches, Honours, and Glories of the World, yet could not endure to be contradicted, nor yield to another Man's Opinion, though much Sounder, because himself was not the first Inventor of it. And by what I can see from History, this was one great Reason, why he differ'd from *Zwinglius* in the Point of the Holy Sacrament, and embraced *Consubstantiation*, which implies, as is said already, that the Body of *Christ* is hid under the Substance of the Bread; a Point that transported him into very great Passion, which made him  
afterward

afterward, upon his Death-bed, deplore, That he had been too hot in his Controversy. He that gave the first Hint of this Opinion, was *John Gerson*, Chancellor of *Paris*, who about the time of the Council of *Constance*, not being able to digest the absolute Doctrine of *Transubstantiation*, and finding that Assertion to be full of Blasphemy and Idolatry, found out this Expedient, as he thought, That *Christ*, as he was a Creature, and had a Body finite, could not be at one and the same time in divers Places, yet being united to the Divine Nature in one Person, the Human Nature, by that Conjunction, had obtain'd, and did obtain that Prerogative, that in the *Lord's Supper* only, and at no Time else, it had the Privilege to be in many Places at once. About 150 Years after him, one *James Faber* of *Stapula*, enlarged this Privilege of *Christ's* Human Nature, and what *Gerson* had restrain'd only to the Sacrament, he extended to the whole World, and made *Christ's* Human Nature, as extensive as his Divinity: *Luther* afterward, exceeding fond of this Opinion, establish'd it in the Church of *Saxony*, insomuch that he averr'd *Christ's* Body was as much in a *Baker's Shop* as in the *Eucharist*; only in the Shop he did not desire to be taken and worship'd, because he had not ty'd himself to a Shop by any Word of Promise: Nay, that his Body was in the very Rope wherewith *Judas* hang'd himself, and went through Doors that were lock'd, and through the very Stone that was laid upon his Sepulchre. A strange Fancy! for certainly *Christ's* Body was crucified at *Jerusalem*, and not in all Places of the World; and when he sat at Table with his Disciples, he did not sit at the same time at *Rome*, or in the *East-Indies*. How near this Doctrine approaches to the Errors of the *Marchionites* and *Manichaeans* of old, who taught, that *Christ* had no real or substantial Body, but only a bodily Shape; and that when he was felt, and found to have Flesh and Bones, it was only by special Dispensation; how near this Doctrine, I say, approaches these



these Errors, condemn'd by the Ancient Church, I will not determine. It cannot be denied, that *Luther* was not always the same, and sometimes he seem'd to deny what he asserted before; but still those among the *Lutherans* that are for this Ubiquity, make him the great Patron of their Doctrine. And tho' some of them give out, that they do not assert the Ubiquity of Christ's Body so much, as his Omnipresence, yet it will be a hard matter to shew, how Ubiquity and Omnipresence differ. Some pretend, that the fore-mention'd Expressions were not *Luther's* Expressions, but foisted in by some, that would fain take Sanctuary at his Books, for the Defence of their Opinions: But the Composers of the History of the *Augsburgh Confession*, are asham'd of this Conceit; and the Elector of *Saxony*, when in the Year 1574. he came to examine the Thing, found that it was only an idle Report, and that in the Edition of *Luther's* Works, there was no Variation used from his own Words and Expressions: And if *Luther* writes in some places against this Ubiquity of Christ's Body, it's an Argument that he ought not to be believ'd in other Books, where he asserts it. Thus came in *Consubstantiation*, and this Opinion the *Lutheran* Churches do at this time follow, and maintain very eagerly: And though in all other Points they differ very little from the Protestants of the Reformation, for with us they protest against *Popish Invocation of Saints, Religious Worship of Images, Human Satisfaction, Indulgences, Purgatory, Worship of Relicks, Prayers in an unknown Tongue, Merits of Works, Transubstantiation, Adoration of Sacrament, Sacrifice of the Mass, Monarchy of the Pope, Pretences of Infallibility, and blind Obedience to the Decisions of Councils, &c.* Yet this Point they do so stiffly, and so uncharitably maintain, that the greatest Part of them refuse Communion with us upon this Account, which as it is an Error, so we believe it is no Fundamental one, especially since all this while they are against *Transubstantiation, and Adoration of the Sacrament*; and tho' in the

the Point of their *Consubstantiation*, they ground themselves much upon that Saying of Christ, *Matth. xxviii. 20. Lo ! I am with you always, even unto the End of the World :* Yet this is easily answer'd : For,

1. From hence it doth not follow, that he will always vouchsafe them his Bodily Presence: For he was after this receiv'd into Heaven, and therefore could not be present with his Body at that time.

2. What he promises here, he made good, when he sent the Holy Ghost, or the Spirit of Truth, upon them; which Spirit, tho' not as to his miraculous Gifts, yet as to his saving Graces, is with all true Believers to the End of the World. So that,

3. His being always with them, must be understood of his Power, and Vertue, and Influence, which would be with them, and with the Churches they should plant, unto the End of the World, as the Sun is in Heaven, and with his Vertue and Influence cherishes this lower World. And thus far we agree with them, that Christ is present in the Holy Sacrament by his Power and Influence, and gracious Assistances, which sincere Believers feel in their worthy Receiving; But from hence it can never be made out, that his Body therefore is hid under the Bread in the Holy Sacrament of the *Eucharist*.

III. In what Sense the Bread in this Sacrament is the Body of Christ, we may easily guess, if we explain Scripture by Scripture, and compare this Expression with others not unlike it.

1. *This is my Body; i. e. This is a significant Emblem, or Sign, or Figure of my Body:* Or this Bread, thus broken, represents my Body, that shall be crucified for the Sins of the World. Thus not only *Rabanus Maurus, Erigena, Bruno, Berengarius*, and other wise Men, understood it in the Ninth and Eleventh Centuries, but most of the Fathers

*Suffragabatur nobis  
τὸς πίσεως analogia,  
Hebraismus actio cir-  
cumstantia, mibi non.  
OEconimo Epist. ad  
Melancth.*

thers that lived before *Pascasius*, or before 800 Years after *Christ*. So that, *This is my Body*, is as much, as this Bread is Representative of my Body: As Bread is proper Food for your Bodies, so my crucified Body is proper Food for your precious and immortal Souls: As Bread strengthens your Bodies, so shall the Comforts and Benefits of my crucified Body support and fortify your inward Man: As Bread nourishes your mortal Bodies, so shall the Love, and Charity express'd in my giving my Body to be crucified for your Sins, nourish your better Part, and a Sense of that Love cause a reciprocal Love and Charity in your Souls: As Bread unites with your Bodies, and turns into the Substance of your Bodies; so my crucified Body, or Faith in me, who give myself for you, shall be a means of my being one with you, and of your being one with me. And this Interpretation is conformable to the Sense of parallel Places; *I am the Door of the Sheep*, saith our Saviour, *Joh. x. 9. i. e.* As the Door opens, and being open'd, the Sheep are let into the Fold, so I am he, by whose Light and Influence Men are admitted into the Number of God's Children, or by my Gospel they get Admittance to God's marvellous Light, by this they are let into the Knowledge of the greatest Mysteries; and by believing in me, Men have Access to the greatest Felicity. So *Joh. xv. 1. I am the true Vine, and my Father is the Husbandman, i. e.* As the Vine hath Branches, so I have Disciples; as the Branches are nourish'd by the Vine, so are my Disciples by me; as the Vine yields an excellent Juice, so my Blood is for the healing of Mens Souls; or what a Vine is to Men on Earth, the same am I to my Living Members; and what an Husbandman doth to his Vineyard, the same doth my Father to the Branches that shoot forth from me, or to my Followers.

2. *This is my Body*, i. e. *This Bread is my Body*, as the roasted Lamb in the great Festival of the Jews, was the Passover, i. e. *The Memorial of it.* This Sacrament



crament of the Lord's Supper being instituted immediately after the Celebration of the Passover, as hath been often hinted, the Disciples of our Lord being acquainted with that way of speaking, could not wonder at Christ's Expression, for thus the *Jews* used to say of the Paschal Lamb, *This is the Passover*, as we may read, *Exod. xii. 11*. And there was not any so rude among them, but understood by this Phrase, that by eating that Lamb, they were to remember the Angel's passing by the Houses of the *Israelites* in *Egypt*, to save them from Destruction. This Sense they imbibed with their Mother's Milk: And when the Father instructed his Children, he told them, that by these Words, *This Lamb is the Passover*, was meant nothing else, but *this Lamb is the Memorial*, or *puts us in mind of the Passover*; for so God had himself explain'd it, *Exod. xii. 26, 27*. So that our Saviour, in saying of the *Bread* he broke, *This is my Body*, brought in no new Way of Speaking, but what the Disciples, and all the *Jews* were already sufficiently acquainted with in Sacramental Discourses, which makes Christ add immediately, to shew that he meant no more by it, but a Memorial, *Do this in Remembrance of me*, i. e. As the Lamb puts the *Jews* in mind of the destroying Angel's passing over their Houses, so the Bread in this Ordinance puts you in mind of my Body, that shall be nailed to the Tree of the Cross for the Life of the World, and tells you, how by that Sacrifice offer'd for your Souls, ye shall escape the everlasting Wrath of God, and the burning Lake, prepared for the Devil and his Angels, as they did the Destruction prepared for *Pharaoh* and his People.

3. That *Christ's Church* is often call'd his Body, none can be ignorant, that peruses these Passages, *Col. i. 18*. *Ephes. v. 23*. *Ephes. iv. 12*. *1 Cor. x. 16*. *1 Cor. xii. 27*. And though that Sense we have already alledg'd, be the principal Thing aim'd at in these Words, *This is my Body*, yet to shew how little Need there is to have

Recourse

Recourse either to *Transubstantiation* or *Consubstantiation*, rather than run into such Absurdities, we might very well say, that the Bread is an Emblem, or Adumbration of Christ's Body, i. e. of Christ's Church: For as that Bread is made up of many Particles, so Christ's Church of many Members; and as those various Crums are closely united to the other, so the various Members ought to be link'd together in Love and Charity, according to the Royal Law, given by our Master, *Joh. xiii. 34. A new Commandment I give unto you, that you love one another.* But this we add, to shew rather, what little Temptation there is, to run ourselves into inextricable Difficulties in the Explication of these Words, than to express the immediate Intent of this Expression. All Churches agree in't, That Christ's crucified Body is meant here, only the Difference is, how the Bread is Christ's Body, and how Christ's Body is present in the Sacrament; we say, it is there spiritually, as the Bread is a Symbol, a Figure, a Sign, a Representation, and a Memorial of Christ's Body, which was offer'd for the Sins of the World: And this Interpretation is so easy, so intelligible, so agreeable to Sacramental Expressions, and to the Analogy of Faith, that one would think it should be impossible for Men to contradict it, except they were resolv'd to defend an Opinion, right or wrong, meerly because it is their Interest to do so. The *Romanists* indeed have of late Years endeavour'd very much to persuade the World, that the *Greek Church* in the *Levant* is of their Opinion in the Sacrament; but not to mention the Rudeness and Ignorance of those poor Churches, which scarce understand the Principles of their own Faith, if the *Protestants* had but taken the same Pains with the *Modern Greeks*, that the *Papish Missionaries* do, i. e. bribed and paid them for their Assent, and Consent of their Faith, they would have been *Protestants* in this Article of the Sacrament, as some of them are *Papists* at this present; *Cyril*, who was Patriarch of *Constantinople*, in the Year 1622,

where-ever he imbibed his Doctrine, certainly was not for *Transubstantiation*: And tho' by the Endeavours of the Jesuites, he was afterwards strangled, yet that doth not make him an Heretick: And tho' several Synods have been held by the *Greeks* of late Years, which have establish'd *Transubstantiation*; yet it's sufficiently known, that it hath been by Instigation of those of the *Roman* Communion, who spare no Cost, that they may bring them to say as they do. However, such *Greeks* as are not yet corrupted by the *Roman* *Emissaries*, are so far from believing *Transubstantiation*, that they know not what it is; and, as a late

Sir George Wheeler's *Voyage*, l. 2. p. 128.

ingenious Traveller hath observed, wonder any Man should think them such Beasts, as to believe such an Absurdity. But what doth it signify, whether the Modern *Greeks*, who are sunk into gross Ignorance and Barbarism, be of our Opinion, or no? 'Tis sufficient, that the ancient *Greek* Church is, and hath been of the same Belief with us. The Churches of the *Levant* at this Day, as Learning is become a very scarce Commodity among them, so their Opinion in a controverted Point, is of no great Consequence: Where they can give Proof of an uninterrupted Succession of their Doctrine, it may be of Importance, else not. The Church of the *Aethiopians*, or *Habassines*, as they have for many Centuries continued in the honest Simplicity of their Doctrine, so their Testimony in this Point of the *Eucharist* may be of some Use; and by what appears, they seem to joyn with us in this Sacrament: For, tho' they pray in their *Liturgy*, That the Holy Ghost may descend, and come, and shine upon the *Bread*, that it may become the Body of Christ; and that the Taste of the *Cup* may be changed, and become the Blood of Christ; yet, by

In Ludolph. *Hist.* *Aethiop.* l. 3. c. 5.

what one of their own Priests confessed, they believe no other Change, but a mysterious or representative one, or a Change of the Use of the Bread, whereby from



from Common it becomes Sacred : And so much appears from the Exposition they give of the Words used by Christ ; for they say expressly, *This Bread is my Body, and This Cup is my Blood.*

IV. From what hath been said, 'tis easy to conclude, what it is to eat Christ's Body in this Holy Sacrament.

1. It is to *contemplate Christ's crucified Body*, and the Cause and Reasons of that Crucifixion ; to view all this with our warmest Thoughts ; to make serious Reflections on his Death and Agonies, and the Bitterness of his Passion. It being spoken to our Souls, not to our Bodies, to take and eat this Body, the Soul hath no other Way to feed upon it, but by a pathetick Consideration of the Particulars of that Death, and the End and Design of God in it, and the Comforts, and the Benefits that thereby redound to Mankind ; and such a Consideration as affects our Souls, touches them to the Quick, and puts them on serious Enquiries into our wretched State, and makes them break forth into Flames of Love ; so that, though Christ's Body was crucified above Sixteen Hundred Years ago, yet a pious Soul can eat it at this Day, swallow the Charity which appears in it with her Thoughts, consider who it is that is so wonderfully concern'd for her Safety, look upon him whom her Sins have pierced, and take a View of that Man of Sorrows, who was bruised for her Iniquities, and wounded for her Transgressions ; and admire the Miracles that are to be seen in all this.

2. *To eat Christ's Body*, is, to apply the Benefits of his Death and Passion to our Souls, and to rejoyce in them as our greatest Treasure. As he that eats with his bodily Organs, applies the Food he takes with his Hands, to his Mouth and Body, and converts it into Blood and Substance ; so the pious Soul is pleased with this spiritual Meat, is refreshed by it, and applies the Benefits of that crucified Body to herself ;

and with the Thoughts of Peace, and Pardon, and Salvation, which are the Blessings that drop from that Tree, arms herself against the Assaults of the Devil, and the Terrors of Death; and believing without wavering, that those Mercies were purchased for her in particular, and that she had a Right and Title to them, stands up in the evil Day, and, in the midst of Temptations, boldly cries with the Apostle, *Who is he that condemns? It is Christ that died*, Rom. viii.

34

3. *To make this crucified Body a Persuasive and Motive to Holiness and Obedience*: To conclude from thence, that if he gave himself for us, to redeem us from all Iniquity, then we must not frustrate his Expectation, nor cling to that Iniquity which he came to free us from: And if he died to purify unto himself a peculiar People zealous for good Works, then we must not defile ourselves after that, nor wallow in the Mire any more with the Swine; but cleanse our Minds from carnal, covetous, and lustful Thoughts, our Wills from Perverseness and Stubbornness, our Affections from Fondness of this present World, and our Hands from Uncleaness. His zealous Love to us, must make us zealous for his Glory; to him we must consecrate ourselves, and to be Holy as he is Holy, must be the Business of our Lives; and so to love him, as to keep his Commandments, must henceforward be look'd upon as our bounden Duty. He truly eats this crucified Body, upon whom this Crucifixion hath that Power, as to crucify in him his known Lusts and Passions, and to engage him to purify himself from all Filthiness both of Soul and Body.

The

*The Preceding Considerations reduced to Practice.*

I. **I**N all Writings, both Ancient and Modern, about this Holy Sacrament, there are various Rhetorical Expressions used, which we must not understand literally, but as Flowers strew'd upon the Hears of our blessed Redeemer, and as Ornaments of Speech, to represent the Greatness of the Mystery. There is Nothing more common among the Fathers, than to call the *Bread and Wine* in the Lord's Supper, *The Body and Blood of Christ*; and the *Cup*, *The Vessel in which Christ's Blood is contain'd*: And many times Christ is said to stand at the Altar, and all the Holy Angels waiting at the Table; that Christ offers his Body to be bruised by the People's Teeth, and dyes them red with his Blood; that the Elements are changed, and become the Body and Blood of the Lord Jesus; and that after Prayer and Thanksgiving, they are no more what they were before; and a Thousand such Expressions besides: From which the Church of Rome presently infers, that they believed: *Transubstantiation*, or a Conversion of the Elements into the Substance of *Christ's* Body and Blood; than which Nothing can be more absurd: For if a Man compare these Sayings of the Ancients, with other Passages in their Writings, it plainly appears, that they meant no more than that the Elements are representative of all this, and that the Expressions they use are nothing but Rhetorical Flourishes, to raise the Peoples Affections, and to render their Devotions brisk, lively, fervent, affectionate, and vigorous. We do the same at this Day, when we tell you, that you come to feast with Christ, that in this Sacrament he is crucified before your Eyes, that you may see his Blood run down, that you hear him groan under the Burden of your Sins, that you see here his Body hanging on the Cross, that you are to stand under the Tree, and catch the



precious Gore, as Balsam for your Souls : All which is true, in a spiritual Sense, and we do it to make you more attentive, and set this Passion out in such lively Characters, that your Souls may be touch'd and enliven'd ; and as Things represented in brighter Colours, strike the Senses more, so we speak of these Things, as if they were visible and perceptible to the outward Eyes, that your Souls may more chearfully feed on the Kernel that lies in those Shells, and with greater Life embrace the glorious Benefits which come to you by that precious Sacrifice.

II. By the same Way that Man was lost, by the same Way he must recover. He was undone by Eating : He must be made whole again by Eating. By Eating he died : By Eating he must come to Life again. *That Day thou eatest of this Tree, thou shalt surely die*, saith God : And the same saith God of this Holy Sacrament ; *That Day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely live*. The Fruit in Paradise became a Savour of Death unto Death unto him : The Holy Bread in this Sacrament becomes a Savour of Life unto Life unto him. *That Eating brought him into Slavery : This gives him a Title to the glorious Liberty of God's Children*. In Eating *that* Fruit, he thought to be like God, and made himself worse than the Beasts that perish : By Eating of this *Bread*, he is enabled to become like unto the Son of God, by being changed into the same Image, from Glory to Glory. *That Eating made him sick : This is Health to his Navel, and Marrow to his Bones*, Prov. iii. 8. *That brought the Plague : This delivers from it*. *That filled him with Wounds and Bruises, and putrifying Sores : This makes his Flesh come again, like unto the Flesh of a little Child*. In a word, by Eating, God's Favour was forfeited : By Eating, it is regain'd : *Let Israel rejoyce in him that made him, let the Children of Zion be joyfull in their King ; for the Lord takes Pleasure in his People, he will beautify the Meek*  
with

with Salvation. Let the Saints be joyful in Glory, let them sing aloud upon their Beds, let them praise the Name of the Lord; for his Name alone is Excellent, his Glory is above the Earth and Heaven.

III. See here how rich a Meal God the Father prepares for our Souls, even the crucified Body of his Son. Shall we look upon that celestial Food with dull and careless Thoughts? Can we behold this costly Bread, and forbear crying out, *Lord! for ever give us that Bread?* Christian, if thou meanest to be saved by the crucified Body of thy Lord, thou must needs eat of it: Not only thy Mouth must eat the Sacramental Bread, and chew it; but thy Soul must ascend and employ herself in Eating of the crucified Body, represented by that Bread. Thy Soul, thy Mind, thy Will, thy Affections must have the greatest Share in Eating at this Table. Thy Body hath little to do here; that is only the Chariot that brings thy Soul to this Banquet: Thy Soul not being engaged and busy here, in Thinking, Admiration, Resolution, Love and Joy, the Cringes and Bowings of thy Body will be insignificant. The End of our common Eating, is Assimilation; and in our ordinary Meals we therefore eat Food agreeable to our Bodies, that it may be united to our Substance, mingle with our Blood, and become one with our Bodies: So here our Souls must feed on the crucified Body of the Lord Jesus, that we may become one with him. All Creatures may be said to be one with Christ, as he is God, as he is their Creator, in which Respect he fills Heaven and Earth with his Presence, and is not far from every one of us; and in him we live, and breathe, and have our Being: Nay, in a more peculiar Manner, every Professor of Christianity may be said to be one with him, as he professes the same Religion which Christ taught his Disciples: But this is not the Union aimed at in this Sacrament; nor can the Union which respects our Profession only, give any great Comfort to a Christian. The Union de-

sign'd by this Sacrament, is affected by the Spirit of *Christ Jesus*; and the Soul that unfeignedly feeds here on the crucified Body of her Master, gets the same Spirit that dwelt in her crucified Lord; which produces the same Graces in her, that shined in that great Shepherd of Souls; and the same Mind, the same Temper, the same Disposition, in Substance at least, though not in the same Degree, is affected and produced in her by this Spirit; as we see, *Rom. viii. 11. Phil. ii. 5.* And this is that Union every true Communicant is to aim at, and from hence flows a Communion with Christ in all his Privileges and Glories, whereby the Soul is raised up together with Christ, and made to sit together with him in heavenly Places, though not by Way of actual Enjoyment as yet, but by getting a Right and Title to those Privileges, as the Apostle informs us, *Ephes. ii. 6.* By feeding on this crucified Body, the Soul is nourished, and gathers Strength against her spiritual Enemies, becomes bold in Temptations, resolute in Dangers, courageous in spiritual Enterpizes. The Soul that comes to feed on this crucified Body, and comes not with this Intent, comes in vain; comes only to stare upon the Cross, but not to be refreshed by it: The Soul that after this Sacrament, yields wilfully to the same Temptations it did before, is ensnared by the same sinful Pleasures that ruin'd it before, is led captive by the same Lusts that entangled her before, certainly feeds not on the crucified Body of the Lord Jesus, because the Contemplation of that Crucifixion works no suitable Effects; which if it did, the Soul would unfeignedly destroy the Body of Sin, according to the Apostle's Rule, *Rom. vi. 6.* and offer up her Body a *living Sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God*, as it is said, *Rom. xii. 1.* Make the Body obedient to Reason, and Sense to Faith, and the Flesh to the Spirit, and it would keep under the Body, and bring it into Subjection, as *S. Paul* did, *1 Cor. ix. 27. i. e.* it would deny the Body those Satisfactions, which are manifest



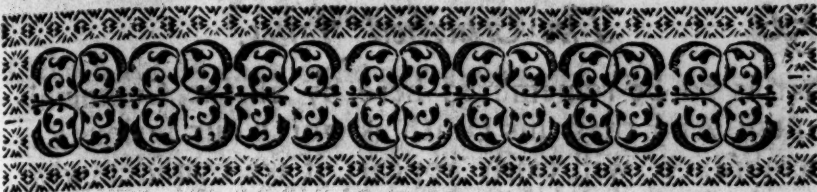
Hindrances to the Things of the Spirit; it would force it to Temperance, to Hardships, to Industry and Laboriousness in God's Service; it would strive and take Care that the Body might become a *Temple of the Holy Ghost*, 1 Cor. vi. 19. and what the Soul doth in this Ordinance, would leave such a Sense upon us, as would not only enable, but constrain us to glorify God, both in Body and Soul, as the Scripture requires, 1 Cor. vi. 20. These are the blessed Effects of Eating the crucified Body of the Lord Jesus: And the Soul that feeds on the Body, will find these happy Consequences; it will not go away empty from this Meal; and though for the present it doth not see all these Effects, yet there is that Impression made on her by this Eating, that these Effects will afterward discover themselves in her Life and Conversation.

*The P R A Y E R.*

○ My God! What Care dost Thou take of my immortal Soul, that it may not starve! Thou hast made large Provision for my Body in the Earth; in the Air, and in the Water: The Earth brings forth Herbs, and Roots, and Cattle to feed it: The Air affords Fowl and Feather'd Creatures to nourish it: The Water provides Fish for it: But none of all these can satisfy my Soul, that must have a spiritual Diet; and rather than it should want, Thou hast given Thine Only Son to be her Food! O mysterious Love! Can I, after this, have low and mean Thoughts of Thy Goodness? O sweet Jesu! if my Soul feeds not on Thee, it must die, and be separated from Thy Glorious Presence for ever: If it feeds on Thee, it is made for ever.  
Oh!

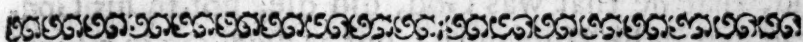
Oh! be Thou my most beloved, and most delightful Food. Thy crucified Body alone can keep my Soul from Fainting: Thy Death must yield me Life: Thy Sufferings must give me Joy: Thy Agonies must afford me Comfort: Thy Torments must work mine Ease; Thy Nails and Thorns must be my Bed of Roses: Nothing else can give my Soul Rest. When the Snares of Death and Hell encompass me, I will lay hold on these Horns of the Altar; here I shall be safe, safer than in the Arms of Angels: Thou that diedst for me, livest for ever to intercede for me; and having such an Advocate, I may come boldly to the Throne of Grace. O let me not survey this glorious Provision, made for my Soul, with carnal Eyes! O let me ponder seriously, not with flying and transient, but with steady and fixed Thoughts, how Thou hast favoured, how Thou hast loved, how Thou hast dignified this miserable Soul of mine, that I may rejoyce in Thee for ever and ever. *Amen.*





## C H A P. XII.

Of Remembring Christ in this Sacrament, or doing what we do here, in Remembrance of Him.



### The CONTENTS.

*The Death of Christ Jesus, the principal Thing to be remembred in this Sacrament. What kind of Death it was, shewn in four Particulars. How this Death is to be remembred : The Benefits of this Remembrance laid down. Tho' the Death of Christ be the principal Thing that is to be remembred in this Sacrament, yet that puts no stop to other Remembrances. Christ's Example makes it lawful to preserve the Memory of any signal Mercy or Providence we meet with. Those that do not remember Christ's Death in this Sacrament, do very much forget themselves. The Remembrance of his Death a Motive to forget the World, and the Vanities of it. This Remembrance, the best Defensative against Sin. The Prayer.*

- I. **A**S these Words, *Do this in Remembrance of me,* do necessarily import the Bread in this Sacrament, to be a Memorial of Christ's crucified Body, or that which is to put us in mind of it, and consequently suppose, that Christ's real Body is absent ; so how Christ is to be remembred here, must needs be worth our serious Enquiry: What Christ calls *Doing in Remembrance of him*, the Apostle, the best Interpreter of his Words, styles *Shewing forth his Death*, 1 Cor. xi. 26. So that his Death is the Thing, that



that is to be remembred here by all the Communicants: And that this Death is worth our serious Remembrance, will easily appear, if we consider what Death the Death of Christ Jesus was: For,

1. *It was the Death of God*: According to the Quality of the Person dying, so his Death is more or less surprizing; hence the Death of a King makes a greater Noise in the World, than that of a Peasant. The Death remembred here, is the Death of the King of Kings; and tho', as God, he could not die, yet it may truly be said, that he that was God, did die, not in his Godhead, but in his Humanity; not as dwelling in a Light inaccessible, but as dwelling in a Tabernacle of Flesh.

*De Defect. Oras.*

*Plutarch* relates, that he had heard his Master *Epitherses* tell this Story, How in the Emperor *Tiberius's* Time, under whom Christ suffered, intending to sail into *Italy*, he went aboard of a Ship, laden with many Goods and Passengers: One Evening, coming near certain Islands call'd the *Echinades*, the Wind slackening, and the Ship being becalm'd, with a slow Pace they arriv'd at last at the Isle of *Paxa*. Several of the Seamen and Passengers sitting up that Night, and drinking, on a sudden from off the Island came a Voice, calling to *Thamus*, the Master of the Ship, thrice, *When you are come as far as the Palodes, proclaim, that the Great PAN is dead*. The Master and his Company, doubtful what to do, whether they should do according to the Import of the Voice, or no, resolved at last, if the Wind favour'd them, to pass by the *Palodes*, and say nothing; but if they were becalm'd about that Place, then to cry as they were directed. So sailing on, and coming to the Place, they found themselves strangely becalm'd; whereupon, *Thamus* call'd aloud, *That the Great PAN was dead*; which Words he had no sooner spoken, but great Howlings, and Sighings, and Lamentations were heard. By *PAN*, the *Heathens* meant the God of the Universe, or him that rul'd, govern'd, and influenc'd all: And it's probable, this Voice had Relation to Christ Jesus, who suffered

suffered about that time at *Jerusalem*; and that upon the News of his Death, Howlings were heard; it's very likelyt his Noise was made by Fiends and Devils, whom the Death of the Son of God, filling all in all, put into those Excesses of Consternation and Sorrow. And lest any Man should object, That the Furies of Hell had no Reason to mourn at his Death, but might rejoyce rather, that their great *Antagonist* was gone; it must be noted, That they feared the Power and Vertue of that Death, such Vertue, as in a short time would make all the Powers of Darknes tremble, and destroy their Empire. When *Abner*, *Saul's* General, was carried to his Grave, King *David* follow'd the Hearse, and said, *Know ye not, that there is a Prince, and a great Man fallen this Day in Israel?* 2 Sam. iii. 38. If such a Death as *Abner's* deserv'd to be taken Notice of, what must we think of the Death of the Lord Jesus? Not a Great Man only, but one, of whom it was said, *Thou Lord, in the Beginning hast laid the Foundation of the Earth, and the Heavens are the Work of thy Hands*, Heb. i. 10. How justly is this Death remembred by his Followers! And what a Mixture of Passions, Amazement as well as Gladness, Trembling as well as Rejoycing, ought it to cause in all Christian Hearts, to think that our God died for us! A Captain hath his like; a General his Fellow; a Prince may be parallel'd with others; a King may meet with others of his Rank and Quality; but God hath no Equal.

2. It was the Death of a Person, higher than the highest, for his Enemies: *Regulus*, *Codrus*, *Mutius*, and among the Jews, *Moses*, had Courage to die for their Country, and the Good of the People they were related to; but still they were their Friends; but here a Person ador'd by Angels, worshipped by all the Host of Heaven, the Comfort of Paradise, the Joy of Seraphim, the Terror of Devils, the Lord of Life, the Eternal Son of God, the Brightness of his Father's Glory, and the express Image of his Person, dies for Men, for Men miserable and wretched, for Men that were Sinners,

ners, for Men that were proper Objects of his Justice, for Men that were Haters of God, acted like Enemies, had affronted their Maker, crucified their Redeemer, came out against him, as against a Thief, who took Pleasure in trampling on his Laws, rejoyc'd in their Disobedience, had made a Covenant with Hell, conspir'd against him who had given them their Being, laugh'd on the Brink of Destruction, were Heirs of Hell, and had no other Inheritance but Damnation; for such this wonderful Person dies, and this makes his Death miraculous and astonishing, *Rom. v. 8.*

3. It's a Death, *that Nature and all the Elements were, confounded at,* and Heaven and Earth seem'd to be at Strife, which of them should be most concern'd at it; insomuch that we are told of *Dionysius the Areopagite*, the Person mention'd, *Act. xvii. 34.* when he was yet under the Clouds of *Paganism*, that beholding the stupendous Eclipse of the Sun, which happen'd about the Time that the Saviour of the World died, brake forth into this memorable Saying, *That certainly either Nature was going to be dissolv'd, or the God of Nature suffer'd.* If ever Nature endur'd a Convulsion Fitt, it did now: The Sun disdain'd to look upon the Barbarity of the Murder, and hid his Face, that he might not see his Creator die: The Earth trembled, as if it were ashamed to see Men stupid at the dreadful Spectacle: The Rocks broke, as if they would testify against the Sinners, that could stand under the Cross without broken Hearts: The Veil of the Temple was rent, as if it would chide the Wretches, that could see the *Messiah* suffer, without rending their Cloaths, and what is more, tearing themselves for the Crime they had been guilty of: The Graves burst their Bands, as if they were concern'd to see Men harden'd against all Impressions of Compassion: The Angels, we may, without Danger of Heresy, believe, stopt in the midst of their *Hallelujahs*; and if ever there was Sadness in Heaven, we must suppose it was at this Time: The upper and the nether World seem'd to go into Mourning, because their Lord and Master



Master gave up the Ghost: Thus much we are told by the inspir'd Writer, *Matth.* xxvii. 51, 52. And this makes the Death of Christ Jesus surprizing beyond Comparison; and surely such a Death ought to be remembred.

4. It is a Death, *whereby the Person suffering merited Eternal Life*, not only for himself, but all his Followers too: A mighty Blessing, but such as was a just Reward of so deep an Humiliation! It was for his Death, that the Everlasting Father exalted Christ's Humane Nature above Powers, Angels, Principalities, and Spiritual Creatures; and in doing so, declar'd, what those, whose Nature he had assumed, if they did follow him in the Regeneration, might come to, after Death, *viz.* Eternal Life and Glory: And what greater Blessing can be thought of, to enjoy all Blessings at once, and to all Eternity? To see God, and to be ravish'd with his Sight for ever; to enjoy Riches, Honour, Glory, Power, Dominion, Pleasure, Recreation, Houses, Lands, in a most eminent Manner; or to enjoy that, which is beyond all these, in inexpressible Degrees, and without Interruption, without Ceasing, without Disturbance, without Envy, without Fear, without Danger of losing it? What can be Greater? What can be more Satisfactory? What can be more Comfortable? This the Son of God hath purchased by his Death. That Death is the Messenger of all these Glories. In that Death all these Treasures are amass'd and heap'd, and pil'd up together, and then it must be worth remembring; nay, it is impossible not to remember it, where all this is believ'd.

II. How this Death is to be remembred at the Table of the Lord, will deserve our next Consideration: And most certainly a slight, transient Remembrance, such as we pay to our Friends and Acquaintance, which are absent, at our common Meals, or at other Times, as we have Occasion to discourse of them, is not sufficient here; for that is not at all agreeable to the Great-

ness

ness and Profitableness of this wonderful Death. It must be such a Remembrance, as,

1. Refreshes our Memories with that marvellous Love, that shines in his Death. This Love must be call'd to mind, even the Love of God, the Love that mov'd him to the Kindnesses we see, and taste, and feel, and have Experience of; the Love that mov'd him to give us a Saviour; the Love that mov'd him to take Pity of us, when we lay in our Blood, when we lay in Darkness, and in the Shadow of Death. *Love, Love, Love*, must here be the *Motto*, the Watch-word, and the dear Expression: And as the Martyr in *Eusebius*, being ask'd divers Questions about his Name, Kindred, Relations, Family, Country, Parents, &c. still answer'd, That he was a *Christian*; so if here we should be ask'd what we think, what we speak, what we mind, what we come for, what we design, what our Business is, or what we delight in, *Love* must be the Answer to all these Questions, *Love* must be the Burden of our Song, even the Love of the Holy Trinity; a Love in which our Life, our Happiness, and all our Hopes are wrapt up; a Love, which Nothing above, and Nothing below, can give us any tolerable Image of: There is Nothing among all the Angels in Heaven, Nothing in the Sun, or Moon, or Stars; Nothing among Men, or Beasts, or Roots, or Herbs, or Stones, or Minerals, that can be said to be truly like it; all Comparisons are feeble, all Resemblances faint; no Language can reach it, no Rhetorick express it, no Oratory describe it, no Pencil draw it; it surpasses our Reason, transcends the brightest Understanding, puzzles the very Angels in Heaven, and perplexes the Spirits of Light and Glory. It is all Sea, all Ocean, all Light; it hath no Bounds, no Shores, no Limits, and the greatest that ever was said of it, or can be said of it, is *S. John's* Expression, *1 Joh. iv. 16. God is Love, Love itself, all Love, all Charity, all Goodness*; and nothing but such Perfection, could have lov'd such poor pitiful

tiful Worms as we are : God looks upon our giving a Cup of cold Water to a righteous Man as an Act of Love ; O then, what an Act of Love must it be in him, to give up himself, to give us the dearest Thing he had, even his own Son ! *Jesus wept over Lazarus, Job. xi. 35, 36. and the Jews said, See how he loved him !* But these Tears were but Drops of Water : Here the Lord Jesus is seen to weep Drops of Blood for us ; O then see how he loved us ! We were blinder than *Bartemaus*, lamer than *Mephibosheth*, fuller of Sores than *Lazarus*, poorer than *Job*, no Comeliness, no Beauty, no Form, no Excellency appear'd in us. *Adam's Fall* had disfigur'd us, defac'd us, ruin'd us ; in this lamentable Condition God loved us, and gave his Son to die for us ; and shall not this Love be remembred in this Death ?

2. This Remembrance requires calling to mind our Sins, which were the Cause of that Death. It's true, the Love of God was the impulsive Cause, but our Sins were the instrumental Cause ; these brought him to the Cross, and whoever remembers his Death, must necessarily remember that, whereby this Death was effected and procur'd ; this was our Sin and the Infection that attended it : But then, if I remember my Sins in the remembrance of his Death, How can I remember them without Detestation ? How can I remember them without Abhorrency ? How can I remember them without arming my Soul with Resolution and Arguments, to fight against them ? Can I look on my Neglects, and not charge them with his Death ? Can I remember my Love to the World, and not accuse it of having had a Hand in Buffeting and Reproaching of Him ? Can I think of my Pride and Wrath, and not bid them look on the Wounds they made in that Holy Flesh ? Can I reflect on my Wantonness and lustful Thoughts, Desires, Words, and Gestures, and Actions, and not be angry with them for having struck Nails into his Hands and Feet ? And what is said of these particular Sins, must be applied to the rest, that we are either guilty of, or most inclin'd to ; they must be



so remembered, as to be represented to our Minds in their odious Shapes, as having been necessary to his Death; and if this be done, we cannot but proclaim War against them, and maintain that War all our Days.

3. With this, there must needs be remembered the mighty Redemption, procur'd and accomplish'd by this Death, even our Redeption from Slavery, a Slavery so much the worse, because we were not sensible of it; and so much more grievous, by how much it was Spiritual. Our Bodies indeed were not laid in Iron, nor, with the *Israelites*, forc'd to make Brick without Straw: There were no Task-masters set over us, to beat, and wound, and bruise us; we were not chain'd to Triumphal-Chariots, or forc'd to work in Mines and Gallies; but it was far worse, our Souls, which were the far better Part of us, were led Captive by the worst of Tyrants; the Law we were govern'd by, was the Law of Sin; the Prison we were doom'd to, was eternal Darknes; the Burdens which were laid upon us, were intolerable; and we were under the Power of an Usurper, whose Smiles were Deaths, whose Favours were Punishments, and whose Kindnesses were Destruction and Ruin; under him we labour'd and toil'd in vain, and when at Night, after our Travel, we looked for Wages, we could expect nothing but Fire and Flames. We read of *Dracula* the *Transilvanian*, that having one Day invited all the Beggars and poor Men he could light of, to a splendid Dinner or Entertainment, after they had fill'd their Bellies, he set Fire to the Hall where they were, and burnt them all: The same Fate we must have expected of that tyrannical Master, under whose Bondage we groan'd, but from this Slavery the Son of God by dying for us, redeem'd and rescu'd us: A Mercy, which as it deserves to be remembered above all the Deliverances that ever happen'd to us, so where can the Remembrance be more proper, than in the Sacrament of his Death and Passion?

4. In vain is all this remembred, if we do not remember to imitate this Saviour in his Self-denying Acts; for therefore all this Mercy, and Love, and Charity is represented to us in this Sacrament, that it may be an Obligation upon us to deport ourselves in the World, after his Example: So that, as he pray'd for his Enemies, so must we; as he blessed them that cursed him, so must we; as he freely forgave the Men that wronged him, so must we; as he died for the Truth, so must we; as he defended it to the last, without wavering, so must we; as he would not suffer any outward Respects to discourage him from Conscientiousness, so neither must we; as he, before his Foes, witnessed a good Confession, so must we; as he did Good for Evil, so must we; as he shew'd Pity to Men in Distress, tho' they had affronted and done him an Injury, so must we; as he bore his Cross contentedly, so must we; as he despised the World, so must we. He that remembers not his Death, so as to endeavour to be like him, forgets the End of his Redemption, and dishonours the Cross, on which his Satisfaction was wrought: For the Honour due to the Cross of Christ, is not, with the Church of Rome, to pray to a Piece of Wood, call'd the Cross of Christ, *Ha! Christ's Cross, our only Hope, in this most blessed Passion Week! Increase the Goodness of the Good, and Pardon to the Guilty give*; but to live in the World as the Lord Jesus did, who was crucified for us; and by living so, to adorn the Doctrine of the Cross of Christ Jesus; that is to admire and reverence his Cross.

III. From such a Remembrance flow more than ordinary Advantages; for Things are useful, according as they are manag'd; and consequently, if the Remembrance here requir'd, be used according to the Rules laid down, these following Benefits will certainly ensue upon it. For,

1. Hereby our Love to God is kindled and renewed: Love kindles Love, as Fire kindles Fire; and there-

therefore God appears in this Sacrament, as he did to *Moses* in the Bush, all in Flames of Love, that those Flames may warm our Breasts: And, O happy Soul, that feels those Flames warm and heat all that is within her! When Love takes Possession of the Soul, or rather, when the Love of God, represented in this Sacrament, raises Love in the Holy Soul, then the Soul becomes the Seat of Wisdom, the Tabernacle of Holiness, the Chamber of the Celestial Bridegroom, a Spiritual Heaven, a Field which the Lord hath blessed, a Spouse dearly beloved, a Garden of Pleasure, the Marriage-house, a Paradise of Vertue, into which the Lord descends, not to find out the Malefactor, and to discover his Nakedness, but to betroth to himself the beloved Virgin languishing with Love, waiting for her Beloved, and longing for the Bridegroom's coming: And where this Divine Love takes place, there the Love of the World expires; for, as *S. Austin* speaks, *He cannot love that which is Eternal, that doth not cease to love that which is Temporal.* And from this Love arise

those happy Breathings, O Fountain of Love! Nothing is sweeter than thy Love, nothing more pleasant, nothing more beneficial. Thy Love is not troublesome: Where thy Love is, there is true Pleasure. It is contented with itself, it knows no Bounds, it watches Opportunities to vent itself, it triumphs in its own Cell, and captivates all the Faculties! Thy Love, O Lord, gives Liberty, drives out Fear, tramples upon Human Merits: It gives Rest to the Weary, Strength to the Weak, Joy to the Mourners: It feels no Weariness, it feeds the Hungry, and keeps the Faint from sinking.

2. Hereby our Consciences are purged from dead Works. This, as it is ascrib'd expressly to the Blood of the Everlasting Covenant, *Heb. ix. 14.* so it must be attributed to the true Remembrance of that Blood in this Everlasting Sacrament. Such a Remembrance cleanseth the Heart, purifies the Soul, makes the Dross of Sin vanish, and the Impurity the Mind was oppressed withall, wear away. Such a Remembrance, like the



the Gift of Prophecy, *Jer. xx. 9. is as a burning Fire shut up in the Bones, which consumes the Hay, and Straw, and Scrubbe,* that annoy'd the House of God: For, the Beauty of God's Love makes the Sin appear black and ugly, and causes a Loathing of it. Hereby Holiness is advanc'd, and Grace begins to flourish, and the Rubbish being removed, the Winter of Iniquity gone, the Frost in the Soul dissolv'd, the Flowers of the glorious Spring appear. This Remembrance chaseth Lust and Luxury; and therefore those in whom it hath these Effects, are said to *wash their Robes, and make them white in the Blood of the Lamb, Rev. vii. 14.*

3. Hereby Christ is invited to dwell in us: The House being thus cleansed and swept, the noble Guest is invited to make his Abode there. This Remembrance is attractive, and where the Soul is thus affected with the Remembrance of Christ's Death, he comes and inhabits that beautiful Palace, for such a Person seems resolv'd to keep his Word: And to him the Promise runs, *If a Man love me, he will keep my Words, and my Father will love him; and we will come unto him, and make our Abode with him, Joh. xiv. 23.* A wonderful Favour, this! To have him dwelling in us, who is the Light of the World, the Light of Heaven, the Light of Angels, and the Sun of Righteousness: And from hence flows the joyful Exclamation of the Apostle, *Gal. ii. 20. Nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ lives in me; and the Life I now live, I live by Faith in the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me:* For this Faith enlightens the Soul, gives it clear Apprehensions of Christ's Love, makes her active and lively, and teaches her to *overcome the World,* 1 Joh. v. 4.

4. This Remembrance is making Approaches to Heaven and Eternal Happiness: Every fresh Remembrance is another Step to Paradise. What an Encouragement is this to come to the Holy Sacrament! Every time we thus remember the Death of Christ, we get nearer to the Throne on which the victorious Son of God sits, triumphing over Hell and Devils: For the

oftener he is remembred thus, the more our Souls are elevated, and become more Spiritual in their Aspirations; and the farther we proceed in Grace, the nearer we come to Glory. Heaven, in Scripture, is compared to a Hill, and is the Mount where God is seen: Every time we come to the Table of our Lord, and remember him thus, we climb higher, and mount up with Wings, as Eagles, till at last we reach the Top, where there is a perfect Calm, no Air, no Wind, no Tempest, no infectious Breath to disturb the Conquerors.

IV. But though the Death of Christ be the chief Object of our Remembrance at this Holy Table, yet that is no Argument, but that we may lawfully remember some other Things relating to his Person, or Greatness, or Holiness; particularly,

1. *His Divine Life*, before he was incarnate: A Life, which no mortal Tongue can describe: A Life, in the Explication of which, the blessed Cherubims themselves must fall short: A Life, known to none, but to Him who knows all, who hath Life in himself, and is the Life, and the Father of the Spirits of all Flesh. How truly might he say to the Jews, Joh. viii. 58. *Before Abraham was, I am!* He was, indeed, from all Eternity, lived in the Bosom of the Everlasting Father, and his Life was most pure, most holy, most peaceable, most pleasant, most glorious: A Life of infinite Content, of infinite Satisfaction, of infinite Joy, and of infinite Love: A Life spent in eternal Love of the great Fountain of Divinity, the express Image of which he was: A Life employed in kind Thoughts to poor Mortals, and in Divine Contrivances how their Misery might be retriev'd, their Bonds loosen'd, their Dangers overcome, their Enemies vanquish'd, and their Souls advanced to Celestial Mansions: A Life undisturbed by the Noise of Wars, unacquainted with Tumults, free from all Annoyances, unmolested by the Disorders of a giddy and confused World: A Life of Eternal Calmness, which no Waves, no Billows, no Wind, no Storms, no Tempests

pests could discompose: A Life of perfect Serenity, and immense Sweetness: A Life employ'd in the eternal and incomprehensible Enjoyment of his own Perfections, and which the inspired King gives us a very lofty Description of, *Prov. i.* This Life Christ liv'd, before he was pleas'd to visit this benighted World with his healing Beams; and it concerns us to remember this Life, that from that Consideration, his Humiliation, in coming to dwell among us, may appear in livelier Colours.

2. To this may be added, *His laborious Life here on Earth*, after he was Incarnate: A Life despicable from his Infancy, contemptible from his Cradle: A Life of Poverty, a Life of great Misery, of Distress, and a Thousand Inconveniencies: A Life he liv'd, to let us know, that the meanest and most miserable outward Condition is no Lett or Impediment to our being belov'd and esteem'd in Heaven: A Life he liv'd, to shew with what Patience and Courage we are to bear the Troubles that a merciful God lays or sends upon us: A Life he liv'd, to declare to his Disciples, that thro' many Afflictions they are to enter into the Kingdom of Heaven; and are not to promise themselves great Ease and Rest here, but are to look for a Recompence in the Resurrection of the Just: A Life employ'd in doing Good, to shew, that we are not to be idle here, but to busy ourselves in that Work which will give the greatest Satisfaction, even working out our own Salvation with Fear and Trembling: A Life he liv'd for our Sakes, to facilitate our Access to Pardon, and the Throne of Mercy: A Life he liv'd, to make our Lives comfortable; and the Remembrance of this Life most needs enhance our Esteem of his unparallel'd Goodness, who could, and would deny himself, both in the Glory of his Divinity, and the Comforts of this present Life, for our Good, and the Welfare of our Souls.



*The Preceding Considerations reduc'd to Practice.*

- I. **C**Hrist's Example makes it lawful to set up Monuments of Mercies, and to preserve the Memory of any signal Deliverance or Providence, either by external Symbols, or by keeping Anniversaries, and Days of Devotion. Indeed, this was a very ancient Practice, countenanc'd by God, and warranted by his Approbation. It was from hence, that *Moses* preserv'd a Pot of *Manna*, to put After-Generations in mind how God had fed his People in the Wilderness; And *Moses* said, *This is the Thing which the Lord commandeth; fill an Omer of it, to be kept for your Generations, that they may see the Bread wherewith I have fed you in the Wilderness, when I brought you forth out of the Land of Egypt, Exod. xvi. 32.* It was from hence, that *Aaron's* Rod budding, blossoming, and bearing Fruit, was kept in the Ark, to tell Posterity how miraculously the Priesthood was establish'd in the Line of *Aaron*, and for a Token against the Rebels, as the Holy Ghost speaks, *Numb. xvii. 10.* It was from hence, that *Joshua* commanded twelve Stones to be taken out of the River Jordan; *That this, says he, may be a Sign among you, that when your Children ask their Fathers in time to come, saying, What mean you by these Stones? Then ye shall answer them, That the Waters of Jordan were cut off before the Ark of the Covenant of the Lord, when it passed over Jordan: And these Stones shall be for a Memorial unto the Children of Israel for ever, Josh. iv. 6, 7.* In Imitation of these Precedents, the Jewish Church afterward, of their own accord, unanimously agreed to keep an Anniversary, to remember their Deliverance from the Rage of *Haman*, *Esth. ix. 17.* Both *Eusebius* and *Sozomen* tell us of a Statue which the Woman, who was cur'd by our Saviour of her bloody Issue, erected to his Honour at *Casarea*, which lasted a considerable time, till *Julian* the Apostate pull'd it down,

*Euseb. Hist.*  
lib. 7. c. 17.

*Sozom. Hist.*  
lib. 5. c. 20.

down, and erected his own in the room of it. After such Examples, who can think it unlawful for a private Christian to keep either a Fast, or a Day of Thanksgiving, when either some signal Affliction hath befallen him, or some remarkable Mercy hath happen'd to him, and to spend that Day in Exercises of Devotion, whereby he may either work his Soul into greater Detestation of his Sins, or into greater Admiration of God's Goodness? Such Exercises the Divine Clemency accepts of, approves of them, and blesses them with new Favours; repeals the Judgments threatned, and confirms the Soul in her holy Zeal, and makes those Devotions Occasions of opening the Windows of Heaven, to shower down larger Benedictions upon her.

II. It must follow from hence, that those who do not come to remember Christ's Death in this Sacrament, do strangely forget themselves: How great is their Number! What vast Multitudes of Men and Women live in this Neglect! O ye, that are sensible of their Sin and Blindness, when you meet with any of them, tell them, they forget that they are Christians, they forget that their Lord and Master hath peremptorily commanded them to come, and remember him in this Feast: And that consequently they are disobedient, perverse, stubborn, wilful; and if they obey him not, are no Servants, no Children of his: For, *If he be their Master, where is his Fear? If he be their Father, where is his Honour?* Tell them, they forget the Danger they run into, and neglect the Means whereby their Souls must be snatch'd from the Devil's Power, and shun the Remedy that must give Health to their Souls; and therefore are guilty of the highest Contempt, and set up their carnal, shallow, brutish Reason against the infinite Wisdom of God. Tell them, they forget they have Souls to be saved, and how long it is before a Soul be wrought into a total Conformity to Christ, and that therefore they had need begin betimes, and tie and engage their Souls to God, under the Cross of Christ, and do

do it often, and force themselves into an Holy Life. Oh, tell them, how they will repent, when it is too late, of their Neglect of so great Salvation. Tell them, Christ will not remember them in the last Day, but profess to them, *I know you not*, because they were not sprinkled with his Blood, and had not the Character of Christians on their Souls, which will infallibly drive them into Desperation.

III. See here, *my Friends*, what an Obligation the Remembrance of Christ's Death lays upon us all, to forget the World, and to mind the greater Concerns above. Christ died to the World; his Life, his Death, and all his Actions, shew'd his Contempt of this present World. He regarded not the Vanities, the Lusts, the Recreations, the Slanders, the Reproaches, the Censures of the World; but *for the Glory set before him, endured the Cross, and despised the Shame*. Can we remember his Death in this Sacrament, and think that he did all this, only for us to admire his Actions, without transcribing all this on our own Lives? Surely, we may live in the World, and yet not be of the World; we may sojourn in the World, yet not be greedy after the World; we may mind our Work in the World, and yet not make the World our highest Good; we may converse with Men of the World, and yet not set our Hearts upon the World; we may be industrious in the World, and yet not suffer the World to engross our Affections; we may provide for our Families in the World, and yet not conform to the World; we may eat and drink in the World, and yet not participate of the Sins of the World; we may trade and traffick in the World, and yet not have the Spirit of the World; we may suffer Afflictions in the World, and yet be far from the Sorrow of the World; we may prudently contrive Things in the World, and yet be Strangers to the Wisdom of the World: In a word, our Living in the World is no Hindrance to our arriving to an holy Contempt of it: And tho' there be some Difficulty in this Task, yet the  
Necessity



Necessity of the Work, and the Reward in the World to come, and Christ's Example, and the Apostles Practice, and God's Readiness to assist, and the All-sufficiency of Grace, are Persuatives and Encouragements strong enough to prevail with any Soul that is not bent upon her own Ruin.

IV. The best Defensative against Sin at any time, is, the Remembrance of Christ's Sufferings. Not only at the Sacrament, but where-ever we are, this Remembrance is an excellent Shield in the Day of Battle. Art thou walking, art thou standing, art thou sitting, art thou going out, or coming in? Set a bleeding Saviour before thee: When Sinners entice thee, think of thy Saviour's Wounds: When thou art tempted to overreach or defraud thy Neighbour in any Matter, think of the bitter Cup thy Master drank of: When any Lust, any vain Desire rises in thy Mind, think of thy dear Redeemer's Groans: When thy Flesh grows weary of a Duty, remember who suffer'd on the Cross: When thou art tempted to be indifferent in Religion, and faint in thy Mind, look upon him who made his Soul an Offering for thy Sin: When thou art loth to overcome, think of him, who by his Death overcame him that had the Power of Death: When impatient Thoughts assault thy Mind, think of the Lamb that before his Shearers was dumb; and sure, under this sad Scene thou wilt not dare to sin. And there is this Advantage in such a Remembrance, that there is a Book of Remembrance written before the Lord, for them that speak often to one another, and *think of his Name*; insomuch that he will remember them in that Day, when he makes up his Jewels, *Mal. iii. 16.*

V. To remember Christ's Death in this Sacrament with greater Life and Sense, it is very necessary to remember him often at other times: And this is the Reason why Christ calls himself by many familiar Names; and the Holy Ghost gives him Titles and Epithets

things taken from Things we daily see, that we might not look on those Things from which he takes those Denominations, without remembering him. To this end, he is called a *Door*, *Joh. x. 9.* that we might not go in or out, but think, *O thou, who art the Gate of Mercy, by whom whoever enters, will find Mercy; open thy Bosom to my wounded Spirit, and let me find Rest in thy All-sufficiency, and the Merits of thy Passion.* For this Reason he is call'd a *Sun*, *Mal. iv. 2.* that we might not view that splendid Luminary without thinking, *O thou glorious Light, that didst shine to those that sit in Darkness; shine unto my Soul, dispel the Clouds that darken my Understanding, and warm my Heart, that it may long for thy Salvation.* Hence it is that he is styled the *Morning-Star*, that whenever we take Notice of that Son of the Morning, of that Harbinger of the Day, we might reflect, *O thou, who tellest the Number of the Stars, and callest them all by their Names; rise, rise unto me, and irradiate my Inward Man, that I may delight in Vertue. Be thou my Guide, lead me to thy Kingdom, keep me from going astray, and preserve me, that I may be thine for ever.* It is from hence that he is call'd *Alpha* and *Omega*, *Rev. i. 8.* which are Letters of the Alphabet, that we might not look upon Letters in a Book without thinking, *Lord, be thou the First and Last in all my Actions: Let me begin with thee, and end with thee: Be thou my Book; let me read the Characters of thy Love, and rejoyce in thee for ever.* For this Cause he is styled a *Shepherd*, that whenever we cast our Eye upon a Man of that Employment, we may beg of *Christ* to feed us with his Spirit: And a *Lamb*, that whenever we see one, we may intreat him to cloathe us with his Innocence: And a *Sower*, that whenever we see the Husband-man throwing Seed into the Ground, we may beseech him to manure the Ground of our Hearts, that we may be neither barren nor unfruitful in the Knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. And he that thus remembers him, in Season, and out of Season, will without Dispute be the better able to remember him in this Sacrament: And to such a Soul,

David's

*David's Saying may justly be applied, The Righteous shall be had in everlasting Remembrance; surely, he shall not be moved for ever, Psal. cxlii. 6.*

*The P R A Y E R.*

O Blessed Redeemer, who didst remember me when I had forgotten Thee, and thoughtest of me when I did not regard Thee! When I lay buried in the common Mass of Corruption, Thou didst not disdain to think on this forlorn Creature! Thou didst pity me, Thou sawest my Misery, and it grieved Thee at Thy Heart: Thy Bowels yearn'd over me, and Thou didst spread Thy Mantle over me! O happy Remembrance! I had been lost, if Thou hadst not looked upon me, I had been undone if Thou hadst not cast Thine Eye upon me; yet, how loth have I been to think of Thee! What an Aversion have I had from remembring Thee! How have I shifted off all serious Reflexions of Thy Love! I have more delighted in Trifles, than in Thee! How sweet have the Thoughts of my Corn, and Wine, and Oil been to me; and how tedious, how irksome all Contemplation of Thee! When Thou hast sometimes put me in Mind of Thy Sufferings, how have I suffered worldly Thoughts to drive Thee out of my Mind! How justly mightest Thou turn Thy Eyes away, and hide Thy Face from me! O sweet, O glorious Object! appear in Thy Beauty, appear in Thy Glory to my Mind; that I may be thoroughly convinced that Nothing deserves my Thoughts so much as Thyself. I am resolved to remember Thee with  
greater



greater Delight and Constancy: Help Thou me. Should not I remember Thee, who hast in a manner forgotten Thyself to remember me! I can remember a Temporal Deliverance, and shall not the Deliverance of my Soul, procured by Thy Death, be remembred by me! I can remember a Disaster which hath some Years agoe befallen me; and shall not I remember the infinite Misery, from which Thou camest to rescue me! I will think of Thee in the Night-Watches, I will think of Thee when I lie down, when I awake, when I rise again. In the great Ordinance of Thy Supper, I will in a most solemn Manner think of Thee. Teach me to remember Thee here with Joy, with Pleasure, with Comfort to my Soul. Here let my Thoughts of Thee be sweet. Whenever I think on Thy Cross, let me remember how by Thy Charity I was freed from the Curse of God. Thou becamest a Curse for me: Ought not this Mercy to be remembred for ever! Write it in my Mind; engrave it upon my Heart, let this Remembrance be easy to me. Chase away all Unwillingness, all Backwardness to this Duty, from my Soul. Oh! let it become natural, and make this Remembrance profitable to me, that my Inward Man may be renewed by it Day by Day, and abound in Love; and the longer I live, the more conformable I may be to Thee, sweet Jesu; To Whom with the Father, and the Holy Spirit, be all Honour and Glory, for ever and ever. *Amen.*



## C H A P. XIII.

Of the other Element, or Part of his Holy Sacrament, viz. the Wine, and the Cup Christ made use of in the Institution of the Eucharist.

### The CONTENTS.

*Red Wine, in all Probability, made Use of by Christ, in the Institution of this Sacrament: As also, Wine mixed with Water. Too great a Stress laid upon this Mixture by the Roman and Eastern Churches. The Cup Christ used in this Sacrament, pretended by the Romanists to be in their Possession. The Cups made use of by the Ancient Churches, what Matter or Substance they were of, examin'd. On the Sacramental Cup, anciently was engraven the Figure of a Shepherd and a Lamb. The Cup, in process of Time, changed into Silver Pipes. Christ gave the Cup to the Disciples, as well as the Bread, for weighty Reasons; to shew that the Bread and the Cup are of the same Worth; and that those that receive the one, should receive the other also. The Abuse of the Church of Rome, in denying the Cup to the Laity laid open. Their Reasons and Arguments answer'd. Why Christ made use of Wine in this Sacrament, discover'd in five Particulars. The Reasons why he made use of a Cup, and no other Vessel. An Enquiry made, why Christ took the Cup, after he had done with the Cup in the Passover. The Cup in this Sacrament, contrary in its Effects to Circe's Cup among the Heathens. None fit to drink of this Cup but Men of Valour and Courage. This Cup very comfortable to all distressed Spirits. The Prayer.*

**T**Hough it be not very material to know what Wine it was Christ made use of in the Institution of this Sacrament, what Colour it was of, or whether it was pure and unmix'd; yet we have

have Reason to believe that it was *Red Wine*, and *Wine mix'd with Water*. *Red*, because this was the usual Wine among the *Jews*, and therefore call'd *The Blood of the Grape*, Gen. xxxix. 11. And when the Royal Prophet would express God's Vengeance upon the Wicked and Incorrigible by *Wine*, he saith, *The Wine is red*, Psal. lxxv. 8. And this sort of Wine did best represent the *Blood of Christ*, which was to be spilt for the Sins of the World, and to make a considerable Figure in this Sacrament. And to this Purpose is that famous Prophecy, *Isa. lxiii. 1, 2, 3. Who is this that comes from Edom, with died Garments from Bozra? Wherefore art thou red in thy Apparel, and thy Garments like him that treads in the Wine-Fat?* Which Words, as, by the Consent of Interpreters, they relate to *Christ's* Death, and bearing the Burden of God's Anger for our Transgressions, so they at once express the *Blood of Christ*, and the Colour of the *Wine*, that was most in Use among the *Jews*; and consequently, 'tis very likely that *Christ* made use of *Red Wine* in this Ordinance. And as it was *Red*, so it is probable it was *Wine mixed with Water*, this also being customary in that Country, as we see *Prov. ix. 2.* in which our Blessed Master lived during his Abode in the World. The Evangelists, indeed, mention no such Thing; but, in general, only tell us, that it was the *Fruit of the Vine* *Christ* and his Disciples drank of: And this sufficiently justifies the Use of pure Wine in our Churches, when the *Eucharist* is celebrated: And tho' the *Jews* are very peremptory in asserting, that it was the Practice of their Forefathers, in the Passover, as well as at other Times, to mingle Water with their Wine, which is the only Thing that makes it likely that *Christ* did not vary in the Institution of this Sacrament, from the Custom of using mix'd Wine; yet, since the Book of God, whereby we are to be govern'd, is silent as to this Mixture, it follows, at least, that the Christian Churches are left to their Liberty to use either pure or mix'd Wine in this Sacrament. The *Roman Church*, at this Day, makes it a  
 Piece



Piece of Religion to use Wine mingl'd with Water in the Cup the Priest drinks of in the Celebration of the Mass. The *Eastern Churches* keep up the same Custom. The *Armenian* Christians heretofore us'd pure Wine, but they were censur'd for doing so in the Sixth Council in *Trullo*. And it is a very strange Uncharitableness in *Theophilact*, to curse these *Armenian* Christians for this Omission: Let them be confounded, saith he, because they mingle not Water with their Wine in the Mystery of the Eucharist. The *Greeks*, who are strangely superstitious, do warm their Water before they mingle it with the Wine, thereby to represent the warm Blood and Water that flow'd from *Christ's* Side after his Death: And, indeed, this was the great Reason why the Churches of old did use Wine and Water in this Sacrament thereby to put the Congregation in Mind of that Blood and Water which ran out when the profane Soldier ran his Spear into *Christ's* Side: though some think, that the Mystery of it was, to express the two Sacraments *Christ* had bequeath'd to his Church and Followers. There were a sort of *Heretics* in the ancient Church, who made Use of Water only in the *Eucharist*, as thinking the Use of Wine unlawful, and an Invention of the powers of Darknes: But the Church condemn'd them as Profane; and thought them unfit for her Communion. And yet, were it so that Christians liv'd in a Country, or Place, where they are in no Possibility of getting Wine, it is not to be doubted, but that any other Liquor which Men commonly drink and refresh their fainting Spirits with, may lawfully be made Use of as a Symbol, or outward Sign of that inward spiritual Grace which we apprehend to be in the Blood of the ever-blessed *JESUS*. At this Day, in the Churches of *Ethiopia*, where Wine is scarce, the Priest, in the *Eucharist*, makes Use of a Liquor made of Water and the Stones of *Raisons* bruis'd and infus'd in it; and

*Zonar. ad Can. 32.  
Conc. in Trullo.*

*Epiphani. Har. 46.  
Aug. Har. 64.  
Philastri. Har. 77.*

*In Ludolph. Hist.  
Ethiop. l. 3. c. 6.*

yet, even to this Liquor they add more Water, to observe the Custom before-mention'd. The same Liquor is us'd by the *Coptites* in *Egypt*, and by the Christians of *St. Thomas* in the *Indies*. And we read of others, who, for want of Wine, have kept a Linnen Cloth by them dipp'd in Wine, and dry'd; and when they had Occasion to celebrate the *Lord's-Supper*, have wetted that Cloth, and made Use of the Liquor thus express'd, instead of Wine: A Custom condemn'd, indeed, by Pope *Julius*, who, in Case of Necessity, permitted a Bunch of Grapes to be bruise'd, and mingl'd with Water. But how can a certain Law be prescrib'd to People that have neither Grapes nor Wine, as it happens in many Countries far distant from the Sea?

II. As to the Cup, out of which Christ and his Disciples drank the Sacramental Wine, some have been so curious as to enquire, not only into the Matter, but also the Form or Shape of it. The more superstitious Sort in the Church of *Rome*, contend, that this Cup was of Silver; and not a few among them believe, at least pretend, they have the very Cup Christ us'd in the first Institution of the Sacrament: But the Mischief is, that this Cup is to be seen in divers Places; as at *Rome*, at *Valentia*, at *Doway*, at *Lions*, and in *Helvetia*: So that either none of all these Pretenders have it; or, if one have the Right, the rest must be Impostors; or, if all have it, it must, since that time, be miraculously multiply'd; which I think may as well be believ'd a *Transubstantiation*. The Evangelists did not think it worth while to mention any thing about it; and whether the Cup he us'd, was of Earth, or Tin, or Silver, or Gold, or Stone, or Wood, tends not much to Edification. *St. Chrysostom* saith oppositely, *Though the Cup the Apostles receiv'd, and drank of, was not of Gold, yet tremendous it was, and full of Majesty and Splendor, because it was full of the Holy Ghost*. 'Tis very probable, that in the more innocent Ages of the Church, when Simplicity and

and godly Sincerity flourish'd, Christians were content-  
ed with wooden Cups, as they are at this Day in the  
Church of *Ethiopia*: These were afterwards chang'd  
into Glafs; and as in Process of Time, Plenty, and the  
People's Liberality increas'd, and the Church fell to  
imitate the Grandeur of Courts, Cups of Silver and Gold,  
and sometimes deck'd with precious Stones, were made  
Use of: Which occasion'd that witty Saying of *Boniface*  
the Martyr, when one ask'd him whether it was proper  
to make Use of wooden Vessels in the Sacrament; his  
Reply was, *Heretofore the Church had golden Ministers, and*  
*wooden Chalices; but now we see golden Chalices and wooden*  
*Priests*; because the Time he liv'd in, was very barren  
of virtuous and learned Men. We are told by some  
Historians, that Pope *Zephyrinus* was the  
first that brought in *Chalices of Glafs*, about  
the Year of our Lord 198; whereas be-  
fore, they had been all of Wood. And to this Pur-  
pose, St. *Jerome*, some Time after, tells us of *Exuperius*,  
the famous Bishop of *Thoulouse*, that he us'd to carry the  
consecrated Bread in a *Wicker Basket*, and the Holy  
Wine in a *Vial of Glafs*; yet they began very early, es-  
pecially in the greater Cities, to bring in Pomp and  
Grandeur about the Vessels us'd in the holy Communi-  
on; as at *Rome*, *Constantinople*, *Alexandria*, and in other  
wealthy and populous Places; which made *Julian* the  
Apostate, seeing the rich Communion-Vessels, say scof-  
fingly, *How splendidly is the Son of Mary serv'd?* In a  
Word, 'tis like, as soon as the Church began to enjoy  
Quiet and Ease, under *Constantine's* Reign, Prosperity  
being impatient of mean and plain Usages, Men began  
to change the primitive Simplicity into more stately  
Ways of Administration of this Sacrament: Not that  
there is any Hurt in using silver or golden Cups in this  
Sacrament but so much I thought fit to mention, to shew,  
that as the Gospel takes Notice of no such Thing, as the  
Matter the Cup was made of, so there is no Strefs to be

*Platin. in Zephy-  
rin. l.*



laid upon it ; and a peaceable Christian is, in this Case, to follow the Usages of the Church he lives in, and to look chiefly to the spiritual Frame of his Heart ; for if that be as it should be, it is indifferent what Matter the Cup is made of in the Administration of this Ordinance. As to the Figure, Form, or Shape of the Cup Christ made Use of, Tradition saith, *It was a Cup with two Handles, holding a Quart of Wine.* 'Tis true, the Jews in their Passover, made Use of such a Measure, which was therefore call'd *Rebiit*, or a fourth Part ; and רביעית Christ might possibly accommodate himself to that Custom, the rather, because it was a Cup that all the Disciples drank of, according to Christ's Order, *Drink ye all of it* ; yet this is still conjectural only ; and therefore the Christian Churches, are, in this Case left to their Prudence and Discretion. *Tertullian* tells us, (and he liv'd about the Beginning of the third Century) that in his Days there was engraven on the sacred Chalice, the Figure of a Shepherd, carrying a Lamb upon his Shoulders ; an Emblem either of the Parable, *Luke xv. 4, 5*, or of the Son of God, who walk'd thro' the Wilderness of this World, to seek those which were lost ; and having found them, brought them back to the Fold again, and to his Father's House. But see how soon an innocent Custom draws on more dangerous Practices : In Process of Time, the holy Cup in the Sacrament began to be adorn'd with various Images and Inscriptions : Such was the Cup which *Rimigius*, Arch-bishop of *Rhemes*, who dy'd in the Year 535, bequeath'd to his Church, with this Inscription, *Out of this Cup, the People drink Life and Happiness, through the Blood of Christ Jesus.* As Superstition afterwards increas'd, instead of Silver Cups the People made Use of, the Monks invented little Silver Pipes, thro' which the People were to suck the holy Wine out of the Cup the Priest made Use of ; which is the Reason why, in the Rules of the *Carthusian Monks*, this, among the rest, was one, *That they shall have nothing*  
of

of Silver in their Colleges, save only a Silver Chalice, and Silver Pipes, thro' which the Lay-men are to suck the Blood of Christ. These Things are hinted here, to shew how necessary it is to keep up to the primitive Institution of this Sacrament; for if once Men presume to deviate from that Simplicity, they know not where to stop; and they will be tempted to hanker after new Devices and Inventions every Day.

III. That Christ gave the Cup to his Disciples, as well as the Bread, is evident from the Institution. And the Reasons were these:

1. To shew, that this Part of the Sacrament is of the same Worth and Value with the other, and that we are to esteem the sacred Cup as highly as we do the Bread; for as the former represented his broken Body, so this, his spilt and flowing Blood: Nay, if there be any Pre-eminence in the one above the other, it must be ascrib'd to the Cup, or the Blood of Christ, represented by the Wine in the Cup; for upon the Blood of the Son of God the Weight of Redemption lies, according to what the Apostle tells us, *Heb. ix. 11, 12.* But Christ being become an High Priest of good Things to come, by a greater and more perfect Tabernacle, not made with Hands; that is, not of his building, neither by the Blood of Goats and Calves, but by his own Blood, he enter'd in once into the holy Place, having obtain'd eternal Redemption for us: And, Without shedding of Blood, there is no Remission; as it is Verse 22. And this shews how miserably the poor People are deluded in the modern Church of Rome, in that they are deny'd the Cup in this Ordinance; for hereby they are depriv'd of that which should afford them the greatest Comfort, and assure them of the Remission of their Sins: For, if the great Stress of Redemption must be laid on the Blood of Christ, and they are depriv'd of that Part of the Sacrament which properly and immediately represents his Blood, which was shed for the Remission of their Sins, it must necessarily follow, that they are in-

tolerably cheated: And what Assurance can they have from this Sacrament, that their Sins are, or will be pardon'd, when they receive not that which must assure them of it? So that the Laity in that Church are left in a most uncomfortable Condition. Nor will it avail much to say, that the People believe that they receive the Blood in the Bread; for it is not Fancy or Imagination that will do any Good here. *Christ* certainly did not think so, which made him appoint a distinct Symbol for his Blood; and, but that they are not to believe their own Senses in that Church, their Eyes and Tongues might convince them, that they do not remember the shedding of *Christ's* Blood for the Remission of their Sins, by drinking of the Wine design'd for that Purpose: For,

2. *Christ*, in giving the Cup to his Disciples, as well as the Bread, intimated thereby, that those who receiv'd the one, should receive the other also. This hath been the Sense of the Christian Church for many hundred Years after *Christ*: The *Greek*, from the Apostles Days to this Hour, hath inferr'd, and doth infer so much; and even the *Latin* Church, for above a thousand Years, was of the same Opinion.

*Georg. Cassand.*  
*Consult. Art. 22.*

'Tis true, in the Church of *Rome*, the Priest drinks of the consecrated Cup, as well as eats the consecrated Wafer: But what have the poor Sheep, the Lay-men, done, that they must be excluded from the Cup? The Apostles, 'tis granted, were Priests, but they receiv'd not the holy Sacrament as Priests, but as Believers: *Christ*, at that Time, was the Priest that administer'd the holy Symbols to them; and Children can tell, that, according to this Way of arguing, the People ought not to receive the holy Bread, because the Apostles were Priests when they receiv'd it. However, to do even an Enemy right, the Church of *Rome* is ingenious enough in their maintaing of this Sacrilege; for the

*Council. Constant.*  
*Rant. Sess. 13.*

*Council of Constance* expressly tells us, That though *Christ* gave the Sacrament to his Disciples in both Kinds; and though in the

Pri-



Primitive Church, this Sacrament was receiv'd by the Faithful in both Kinds; yet notwithstanding all this, the Fathers of that Council think it fit to abrogate that Custom, and threaten the Priest with Excommunication, that shall offer to give the consecrated Wine or Cup to the common People. And, I confess, this is plain Dealing, but in the worst Sense; as Men do justify their Sins, and boast of their Iniquities: And with what Conscience any Person can be of that Church, that doth assert and defend, and obliges her Members to comply with such manifest Contrariety to the Doctrine of Christ, I know not. This I know, that Obedience to the Precepts of the Gospel is a commanded Duty, and they are excluded from Christ's Favour and Friendship, that will not keep his Words; and all Pretences of Love are rejected, as Pageantry, where Obedience to his Commands is not the Product of that Love; and consequently, they can expect but little Favour of him, that knowing their Master's Will, will not do it; and being convinc'd, that he hath given this general Rule, *Drink ye all of this*, prefer their own Fancies, and would rather break his Command, than either acknowledge themselves in an Error, or return to the Truth, which they have forsaken.

IV. That which gave Occasion to this Sacrilege in the Church of Rome, was partly the Pride of the Clergy, who, by receiving in both Kinds, would needs distinguish themselves from the Laity; partly the Asseveration, or keeping of the consecrated Bread in some Houses, practis'd by inconsiderate People in ancient Times; partly the Doctrine of *Transubstantiation*; for the Roman Clergy perceiving, that the People would never receive this absurd Doctrine, if they did not make them believe, that in the Wafer they receive Christ's Blood, as well as his Body, thereupon deny'd them the Cup; partly some frivolous Pretences, as, *That in some Places Wine could not be had*, others

others were abstemious, and naturally hated Wine; some had long Beards, and might spill the holy Wine upon them; and some had the Palsy in their Hands, whereby they might let the Cup fall, &c. Pretences which the primitive Church did not so much as dream of. It is certain, that this Sacrament is a Feast; and as any ordinary Feast would look strange, if no Drink were given to the Guests, so the Sacrament in the Roman Church, loses the Name of a Spiritual Feast, by their denying the Cup to the Laity: And one may justly wonder, how, in that Church, they can understand the 6th Chapter of St. John's Gospel of the holy Sacrament, since it is expressly added, v. 53. *Except ye drink of the Blood of the Son of Man, you have no Life in you*: This very Place did so much pinch *Æneas Sylvius*, who was afterwards Pope, by the Name of *Pius II.*, that when the *Bohemians*, and *Taborites*, demanded the Cup in the Sacrament; upon that Saying of *Christ*, he had no other Way to extricate himself, but by alledging, that in that Chapter, *Christ* did not speak of the Sacrament at all, but only of spiritual Eating and Drinking in general, viz. by Faith, or practical Belief of his Doctrine. And this Opinion, not a few of the *Romanists* are forc'd to espouse; yet the Generality of them understand it of the Sacrament, and how the People can content themselves under such a Threatening, if that be the Sense, I cannot comprehend. And tho' some of them plead, that there is a Difference betwixt the Institution and a Precept; and tho' *Christ* instituted this Sacrament in both Kinds, yet he did not command it to be receiv'd in both Kinds; yet, who sees not the Weakness of this Exception, since *Christ* hath commanded us to use and administer this Sacrament, as he hath us'd it; and expressly adds a Command concerning the Cup, *Drink ye all of this*. And tho' in *Luke xxiv. 30.* *Christ*, is said to be known of the Disciples by his breaking of Bread, yet from hence it follows not, that by that breaking of Bread is meant the *Eucharist*; nor if we granted, that the *Eucharist* is to be understood there, that there-

therefore they had no Wine, since the whole Action is commonly express'd by breaking of Bread, as *Acts* ii. 42. And if this were granted, it would follow, that Christ consecrated only in one kind, which they of the Church of Rome themselves will not allow. But they, that from such Expressions would infer, that Bread only was us'd in the *Eucharist*, betray their stupid Ignorance of the Customs and Expressions us'd among the *Jews*, who commonly call'd any Meal whatsoever, where all sorts of Food and Drink were us'd, by the Name of *breaking Bread*; and to *break Bread* with a Man, was as much as to *Dine*, or to *Sup with him*: And so the *Grecians*, from the other Part of a Meal, call'd it *Συνάουιν*, or drinking together, as the *Jews* call a Feast *משח* *Meshteh*, or Drinking; tho' Meat, as well as Drink, was set upon the Table. What some *Hist. Eccl. 1. 13. c. 7.* alledge out of *Nicephorus*, concerning a Woman, in *St. Chrysostom's* Time, infected with the Heresy of *Macedonius*, who coming to receive the Communion, substituted or took common Bread, instead of the Sacramental Bread, which thereupon, by a Miracle, was turn'd into a Stone; and would infer from thence, that the Laity, at that Time, receiv'd the Bread only, is altogether insignificant; for not to mention that that Story may justly be suspected of Falshood, since *St. Chrysostom* himself makes no mention of it, it's evident from his Writings, that the Laity in his Time, receiv'd the Communion in both Kinds; and if such a Miracle had been wrought before he receiv'd the Cup, how doth it follow from thence, that none of the other Communicants, which were present, did receive the Cup? God might, by that Miracle, shew and discover to her, her unworthy Receiving, whereby being frighted, she might be afraid of receiving the other Part of the Sacrament; yet still that doth not make it out, that the Communion was in those Days receiv'd only in one Kind: And besides, what would the Practice of a particular



ticular Church signify, if it contradicted both the Practice of *Christ*, and of all other Churches? That the Sacramental Bread was carry'd Home, kept, and preserv'd by some in Boxes, at their own Houses, which in Case of Necessity or imminent Danger, they made Use of, we deny not; but the Practice of particular Persons is no Law, no Prescription; and the Papists themselves will not allow Lay-men to keep the consecrated Wafer in their Houses, and to communicate without a Priest: So that this Practice of particular Persons, neither infers the Lawfulness of it, nor the Lawfulness of communicating in one Kind. The primitive Churches were very much against this keeping of the consecrated Bread,

*Hierom.* in 1 Cor. 2.

*Hist. Ec.* l. 17. c. 25.

*Hesychius* in Levit. 18.

*Can.* 3.

after the Communion, if any of the consecrated Bread were left, the Communicants divided, and eat it up: *Nicephorus* assures us, that it was the Custom of the Church of *Constantinople*, for many Years together, that if after the Communion much Bread were left, more than the Ministers present could eat, the Boys that were fasting, were call'd from their School, and had Liberty given them to eat it up. In *Hesychius's* Time, it was customary, if after the Communion any Bread remained, to burn it. And in the Council of *Caesar Augusta*, about the Year of *Christ* 513, it was decreed, that if any did not eat all the Bread in the *Eucharist*, that was given him, but did carry it Home, he should be excommunicated for ever. So that whatever the Practice of some particular Persons was, the Church, we see, protested against it, and abrogated it, partly because there was no Example for this keeping the Bread at Home in the Gospel, partly because it might, as afterwards it did, give Occasion to many Superstitions; as indeed the Asseveration of the consecrated Wafer in the Church of *Rome* at this Day, is nothing else; for they keep it in Boxes or Chests, that they may carry

it about, and promote the Adoration of it in the Circum-  
 gestation; and when any great Fire, or Wind, or Tempest  
 happens, this is pretended to have great Virtue, either to  
 lessen or avert those Evils. It is pleaded commonly, that  
 the Laity may, with greater Convenience, receive only in  
 one Kind, and with as much Profit too, as if they receiv'd  
 in both; but that this is false, appears from hence.

1. Because nothing can be convenient for the Laity,  
 that is against Christ's Institution and Command; and  
 as the Bread is to lead them to the Contemplation of  
 Christ's crucify'd Body, so the Cup is to direct them to  
 fix their Thoughts on the Blood he spilt for them. And  
 if this Way of reasoning were just, why should it not be  
 as convenient for the Priest to receive in one Kind, as  
 for the Laity?

2. Because the Profit that is to be receiv'd by the  
 Communion, must be receiv'd in that Method and Or-  
 der, that Christ hath thought fit to dispense it; and since  
 Christ thought it most proper, that this Profit should  
 be receiv'd by communicating in both Kinds, to expect  
 Profit contrary to Christ's Design and Intention, is to  
 deceive our selves. Some of the *Papists* themselves  
 grant, and it was asserted by several in the *Council of*  
*Trent*, that greater Grace and Comfort was to be recei-  
 ved by Communion in both Kinds, than by Communi-  
 on in one only; and there were some of the primitive  
 Fathers, that thought that the Bread extended its Vir-  
 tue to the Body only, but the Wine to the Soul; and  
 if this were to be allow'd of, the Laity, in the Church  
 of *Rome*, must be either suppos'd to have no Souls, or  
 that their Souls receive no Profit by the Sacrament, since  
 they are deny'd the Wine. But however, if Commu-  
 nion in one Kind, be so profitable for the Laity, why  
 should it not be as profitable for the Clergy?

V. Why Christ made Use of Wine in the Institution of  
 this Sacrament, several Reasons may be given: As,

1. One great Property of *Wine*, is, to give Men a cheer-  
 ful Countenance, and to make glad the Heart, *Psal. civ. 15.*

And

And sure this was to let us see, what Joy our Souls are to expresse at the Remembrance of God's Compassion and Charity; a Joy which will appear very rational, if we frame right Apprehensions of our natural Condition; for, let me take a View of the State of my Soul abstractedly from Christ's Meditation and God's Love, I shall appear to my self a Creature forsaken of God, destitute of Mercy, depriv'd of Hopes of Pardon, an Object of Wrath, a Scorn of Angels, the Sport of Devils, a Companion of Reprobates, a Prey to ravenous Birds, an Heir of the burning Lake, a Subject of Damnation, a Slave to the worst of Masters, hated by Heaven, condemn'd by mine own Conscience, and in a worse Condition than the Beasts that perish; and let me suppose that I were surrounded by Wolves and Lions in a barren Wilderness, Vipers and Serpents crawling about my Heels, every Moment in Danger of being torn to Pieces, and in Danger of a cruel, lingering, and barbarous Death; and in these sad Circumstances, should some kind Deliverer leap from behind a Thicket, or come riding toward me from afar, to rescue me from this impendent Ruin, how should I rejoyce at the unexpected and unlook'd for Providence? My Case, by Nature, is much worse; for wild Beasts may devour me, and make an End of my Pain; but here I find my self beset with hellish Furies, so far from being willing to make an End of my Life and Pain together, that they seem resolv'd to increase it daily; and no Angel, no *Lazarus*, no Messenger out of the Clouds, vouchsafe's a Drop of Water; and therefore, in so deplorable an Estate, to see the Son of God springing in and flying to my Rescue, and crying, *I will heal thy Backslidings*; and unto my Enemies round about me, *O Death, I will be thy Plague. O Grave, I will be thy Destruction*; what Joy, what Gladness, what Comfort must this cause?

2. By *Wine* he represented the everlasting Joys he intended to purchase for his Followers, by his bitter Death and Passion; he himself gives us a Hint of this, *Matt. xxvi.*



29. *I will not drink henceforth of this Fruit of the Vine, until the Day that I drink it new with you in my Father's Kingdom*; i. e. of this material Wine, I shall, after this, drink no more in your Company; but when you are advanced to the Joys and Glories of my Father's Kingdom, then I'll drink and feast with you again; and the Wine I will then give you to drink of, shall be new Wine, infinitely different from this Wine, which shall have other Effects, and other Operations: *Wine*, which the dull World is a Stranger to; *Wine*, which Gluttons and Drunkards shall never taste of; *Wine*, that shall fill your Souls with the purest Joys, with Delights purely Spiritual and Celestial; so that these everlasting Joys may be call'd *Οἶνον παρρησίας*, *Wine fulfill'd*, as St. Luke speaks of the Bread, Luke xxii. 16. And then the Wine may be said to be compleated and fulfill'd, when that which is represented by it, is actually fulfill'd and conferr'd on the Persons who are counted worthy of it. The Joys above, are the Wine of Angels; this Wine is the clear Vision of God, or the glorious Sight of the Fountain of Light and Beatitude; this inebriates their Understandings, irrigates the Spirits of Men made perfect, makes them drunk with Joy, and their Reason is lost in Raptures and Extasies; and therefore justly stil'd *Joy, which Eye hath not seen, and Ear hath not heard, and Heart cannot conceive*. The Souls of Men, it seems, are Channels too narrow to hold those Joys; they over-run the Banks; and as the Flame of a Candle is lost in the brighter Sun-shine, so the divine Light in Heaven shining upon Souls, they are, as it were, lost in that glorious Splendor.

3. *Wine* is the Emblem of Wisdom too; so much we may guess from what you read, Prov. ix. 1, 5. *Wisdom hath built her a House, she hath bewen out her seven Pillars, she hath kill'd her Beasts, she hath mingled her Wine, she cries, Come eat of my Bread, and drink of the Wine that I have mingled*: So that we have Reason to conclude, that our Saviour, in using Wine in this Sacrament, would express the

the Necessity of a vigorous Application of our Minds to spiritual Wisdom, even to that Wisdom which drives out Sensuality, expels the Wisdom of the Flesh, despises the Wisdom of the World, and values Christian Simplicity above all *Words which human Wisdom teaches*; Wisdom which seems Folly in the Eyes of the World, but is really an Effect of the Spirit of Wisdom and Understanding; *Wisdom*, which concludes, *if Christ hath done for me what the Scripture saith he hath, laid down his Life, spilt his Blood, sacrific'd himself, given himself a Ransom for me, a Mercy without which I could neither have been safe nor happy, and a Share in which must needs be more to me, than the Wealth of Kings: What can be more reasonable than that he should be my Master, and I his Servant; that he should command, and I obey; that he should govern, and I submit; that he should prescribe Laws, and I act according to those Laws, whatever Danger, whatever Trouble, whatever Inconvenience I put myself to.* This is the Wisdom of God, or rather infused by God into the Soul; and if any Sort of Wisdom were hinted by Christ's using Wine in this Ordinance, it must be this Wisdom; for this is Gratitude and Ingenuity, and an Argument, that we receive not the Grace of God in vain.

4. *Wine* hath Briskness and Spirit in it; and might not this be an *Item* to tell us, how lively and vigorous our Love should be to Christ Jesus? And how, like new Wine, our Love should be ready to burst the Bottles, at least, vent it self in some such Ejaculations? Oh Jesu, how sweet, how lovely, how amiable art thou, how full of Beauty, how full of Glory, how full of Majesty in the midst of all thy Pain and Sorrow! Thy Wounds look dismal, yet was never any thing more medicinal, never did any thing afford greater virtue: For they can cure Sin, they are Preservatives from Hell, and the surest Amulets against Infection; from these the costly Balsom flows, that must restore my wounded Soul! Oh how I love thee! Oh how I prize thee! Oh how I esteem thee! Thou art more to me than Father and Mother, more than Lands and Houses: I read of Fountains that flow'd with Oil, when  
thou

thou wast born, but that's no Comfort to me; thy Wounds are the Springs that send forth an Oil, precious, and sweet, and odoriferous, whereby the Diseases of my Heart are expell'd; this is the Oil of Gladness, anoint my Head with it, and from thence let it run down to the Skirts of my Cloathing, that my whole Man may be thine, and my Soul and Body, and all I have, may participate of thy Grace and Compassion.

5. Wine is cleansing too; and might not this be an Hint of the purifying Quality of the Blood of the Holy Jesus? Surely that Blood cleanses us from all Sins, it washes whiter than Snow, Fullers Earth is not to be compar'd with it. Tho' the Sinner wash himself with Nitre, and take much Soap, to purify his Soul, yet that will not take away one Spot; still his Iniquity will be mark'd before God; but the Blood of Christ will make him clean, so clean, that God will spy no Iniquity in *Jacob*, and no Perverseness in *Israel*; so clean, that no Wrinkle shall appear in him: One would think nothing could have been more filthy than some Sinners have been, yet upon their Repentance, the Blood of Christ hath so purify'd, so cleans'd, so beautify'd their Souls, that even Angels have fall'n in love with them.

VI. That Christ made Use of a Cup, in the Distribution of the Wine, we have already taken notice of; but whether there might not be some Mystery in his making Use of a Cup, and no other Vessel, is a Thing worth our Consideration. And,

1. The Prophets have spoken of a Cup of trembling, and of a Cup of God's Fury, *Es. li. 17. Jer. xxv. 15, 17, 18.* This Cup the *Jewish* Nation was to drink of, their Commonwealth and Policy was to be destroy'd, and inexpressible Calamities were to light on them; and the second Captivity was to be worse than the first, as their Sins that caus'd the second, were greater than those which occasion'd the first; Miseries so great, that when  
Christ



Christ beheld the City, he wept over it, and said, *The Days will come upon thee, that thine Enemies shall cast a Trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every Side, and shall lay thee even with the Ground, and thy Children within thee, and they shall not leave in thee one Stone upon another, because thou knowest not the Time of thy Visitation*, Luke xix. 41, 43, 44. This was the Cup of Astonishment that unhappy Nation was to drink of; so that his making Use of a Cup, was an Allusion to that Misery; for now the Time drew near, and they were going to do that, which would hasten their Ruin, viz. kill the Lord of Glory, and their greatest Friend.

2. Himself was to drink the Cup of the Lord's Fury, to atone for the Sins both of *Jews* and *Gentiles*; and of this the Cup he took was an Emblem. He had generously and freely undertaken to open to Mankind a Way to God's Favour: This Way could not be made, considering the Decree of God, but by his Sufferings; and accordingly, we find him drinking so deep of this Cup, that in the Garden of *Gethsemane*, he falls into an Agony, and his Sweat was, as it were, great Drops of Blood falling to the Ground, Luke xxii. 44. That which made this Cup so bitter, was the Greatness of the Sins of Mankind, and the dreadful Wrath of God they had deserv'd; particularly, the monstrous Sins of the *Jewish* Nation, to whom the first Offers of Grace were made; and the unspeakable temporal Calamities which were to come upon them for their Perfidiousness, and Contempt of the greatest Mercies; and their total Desolation and Destruction, for their Hardness and wilful Stupidity. These, as they were represented to his Mind in a lively Manner, so it caus'd prodigious Grief in his Soul, insomuch, that he profess'd his Soul was sorrowful unto Death. This was a Cup, the most loathsome that ever Mortal did take, and therefore he calls it by that Name, *Father, if it be possible, let this Cup pass from me*, Luke xxii. 42. He takes therefore a Cup here, that his Followers in future Ages might think of the  
Cup

Cup he had drunk of, with so much Terror and Consternation.

A Cup he took, to let us see that the Cup in this Sacrament, was the true Cup of Salvation. We find mention made of a Cup of Salvation, and of a Cup of Consolation, *Psal.* 116. 13. and *Jer.* 16. 7. But the Cup in this Sacrament, is of far greater Virtue. The Cup of Salvation among the *Jews*, was either the Cup of Wine they made use of in the Passover, or the Cup they drank of at Festivals or Feasts, when they rejoyc'd with their Friends, after some signal Mercy and Deliverance. The Cup of Consolation was properly that which they gave to Mourners at Funerals, especially where People took on excessively for the Death of their near Relations, or were ready to sink with Grief; but the Cup in this Sacrament, is a Cup of Salvation and Consolation in a sublimer Sense. By the Blood of Christ, Mankind was made capable of inheriting Life and eternal Salvation, which is beyond being sav'd from *Egypt*, from the *Midianites*, from the *Assyrians*, and from the *Chaldeans*; so that he that drinks of this Blood contain'd in the Sacramental Cup, and drinks like a thirsty Man, with a Thirst after Righteousness, drinks Salvation, drinks everlasting Mercy, drinks to the Content and Satisfaction of his Soul, and out of his Belly shall flow Fountains of living Water, i. e. Streams of Grace and Goodness shall flow from his Heart, to the watering and enriching of those that are round about him, *John* 7. 38. And this must needs make it a Cup of Consolation; for what greater Comfort can there be, than to drink the rich Draught of Pardon, of Peace, and Mercy, and Joy in the Holy Ghost, as every Soul is suppos'd to do, that comes to this Ordinance with unfein'd Resolutions to have her Conversation in Heaven.

4. A Cup he took, to put us in Mind how necessary God's Goodness, Favour, and Providence, is to us; for this was express'd in the Law, by making God the Portion of their Cup, as we see, *Psal.* 16. 5. The Lord is the  
 O Portion

*Portion of my Inheritance, and of my Cup;* a Phrase much us'd among the Jews of the devouter Sort, when they would declare, not only their Interest in God's special Providence, but the Necessity of having a Right and Title to it. A Cup is a necessary Utensil in a Family, and there is scarce any Person so poor and needy, as to want a Cup; so hereby they express'd both the absolute Necessity of having a special Interest in God's Love, and the Possibility the poorest Body was in, to arrive to this Privilege. A Man may be happy without Lands and Houses, and happy without an Estate, without Father and Mother, without Children, without a Prince's Favour; but he cannot be happy without an Interest in God's gracious Inclinations and Complacency. Even an idolatrous *Laban*, *Gen. xxxi. 30* was in some measure sensible of this Truth; for when *Rachel* had stollen her Father's Images, he seem'd to be much concern'd for them. *If thou wouldst needs be gone, wherefore hast thou stollen my Gods?* As if he had said, I could have been content with thy taking away my Daughters, my Grand-Children, my Cattel, and my Sheep; but to steal my Gods, than which nothing is more dear, or more necessary to me; this I cannot brook. A Cup therefore Christ made use of in this Sacrament, to tell us of what Concernment it is to have God for our Friend; and if he be our Portion, we need no more; if he be the Portion of our Cup, we have Wealth and Bliss enough, and may defy all the Powers of Hell, who in this Case may assault, but cannot prevail against us. Indeed if Christ be ours, and will vouchsafe to intercede for us, we are more than Conquerors. *O Jesus! thou art our All, our Crown, our Glory; if thou be for us, we need not fear who is against us! Let thy Wounds be ours, and our wounded Spirits will be at rest: O tell us, that thine Agonies are ours, and we will triumph over Death, and sing, O Death, where is thy Sting! O Grave where is thy Victory!*

5. *A Cup he took,* to bid us mind what he had so often told the Pharisees, and to hint to us, that whenever



we see this Cup in the Sacrament, we ought to ask our Hearts, whether we make clean *the inside of the Cup and Platter*, as the Expression is, *Mat. xxiii. 27. i. e.* whether we purify our inward Man, our Souls and Spirits, from those covetous, disorderly, unclean Desires, Thoughts, and Imaginations, which are so apt to harbour there. True Religion is no out-side Business, but must be rooted in us, and a Sense of the Love of God, must be riveted into our Spirits, that there God may become truly amiable to us; and what we feel within, may force, as it were, the outward Man into a suitable Fruitfulness. Most Mens Religion, like their Clothes, adorns only the outward Man; and saying their Prayers, going to Church, and doing such little Things, as are no Trouble to their Lusts, or sinful Appetite, are the principal Ingredients of their Divinity; but this is not the Light which Christ's Religion gives, for that strikes the Understanding, works upon the Will, and puts all that is within us, into Fermentation: This cleanses the Heart from Filthiness, the Thoughts from Vanity, the Mind from Prejudice, the Affections from Love of the World, from Malice, Hatred, and supercilious Contempt of our Neighbours, and the Desires from Revenge and Greediness after the Shells and Husks of outward Comforts, so that true Religion is a new Principle, which produces a new Creature, and Newness of Life, *2 Cor. v. 17.*

6. And why may not we piously believe, that his *making use of a Cup*, was also to encourage our Charity and Hospitality, express'd sometimes by *giving a Cup of cold Water to a Disciple, in the Name of a Disciple*, *Mat. x. 42.* He that knows any Thing of this Holy Sacrament, knows it is a Feast of Charity, a Feast, at which we remember our spiritual Poverty, and lying at the Gate of Heaven, fuller of Sores than the famous Beggar before the Palace of *Dives*: And can the undeserv'd, unexpected, and inexpressible Charity of God to our Souls, shine in our Faces, ar

not warm our Hearts and Bowels into Compassion, and Commiseration to the Poor and Needy, such especially as are of the Household of Faith? If we are so low in the World, and Providence hath put us in so mean a Condition, that we can give no more than a Cup of cold Water, and do but run to the next Well or River, and fill the Cup, and bring it to a distressed and fainting Christian, a good Man, and a Disciple of our Lord, even that shall be interpreted favourably, and God will find out a Recompence for it; a Recompence which shall make the Giver sensible that it was for that Cup he gave, that he receives that Mercy, provided still, that this Charity proceeds from a Sense of the Love of God, and Tenderness to the Necessities of the humble Man. This Consideration, one would think, should be baulk'd by none that comes to the Lord's Table, where the Lame, and Blind, and Maim'd are entertain'd; for such abasing Thoughts of our selves we are to entertain here; and if so, how easy, how natural is the Inference! *If so miserable a Creature as I, am feasted here, and God gives Bread of Life to my hungry Soul, how can I express my Gratitude better, than by casting my Bread upon the Water, especially when I am promis'd to find it again after many Days, floating on the Rivers of Pleasure, which are at the right Hand of God for evermore?*

VII. Both the *Evangelists* and *St. Paul*, taking Notice that Christ took this Cup, after he had done with the Cup in the Celebration of the Passover, we must not pass it by, without making some Remarks upon it. And,

1. It was to teach us *Order in our Duties*, and to avoid Confusion in our holy Performances. God is the God of Order, and 'tis fit his Servants should resemble him in this Particular. Greater Duties must ever be preferr'd before the lesser, and Mercy many Times comes to be a greater Duty than Sacrifice. Ordinarily,  
a Duty

a Duty of God's Worship, we have resolv'd upon, ought to be preferr'd before a Duty of Civility; and a customary Visit is not to dash or hinder our intended Devotion. God must first be pleas'd, and then Man, in Things lawful and convenient; yet Charity is of so great a Value in the Sight of God, that many times he bids us prefer that before Devotion. When my Neighbour's House is on Fire, I am bound to run, and endeavour to quench that, tho' the Hour is come that I use to enter into my Closet to pray to my Father in Secret; and my sick Neighbour wanting my Help and Assistance, I may justly prefer a charitable Visit, before my accusom'd Supplications. Nor is this all the Order that is to be observ'd in Duties; the Business of our Calling, must be begun with Prayer, and concluded with Thanksgiving; and he that, when first he awakes in the Morning, lets his first Thoughts be of God, and when he is up and dress'd, applies himself to singing of a Psalm, or to meditating in the Law of God, by reading a Chapter in the Bible with Attention, then kneels down to Prayer, either by himself, or with his Family, and afterwards goes to his lawful Employment, and in the midst of that Employment forgets not that God sees and hears him, but runs up often with his Thoughts to Heaven, takes Notice of God's Providences, and before he goes into Company, arms himself with holy Ejaculations against Sin and Infection, and at Night reviews what he hath been doing in the Day-time; such a Person acts orderly, and draws a Blessing down upon the Work of his Hands, not to mention the Peace he thereby procures to his Mind and Conscience.

2. He took *this Cup* after the Paschal Cup, to shew that after the *Jewish* Oeconomy, another, and much nobler Dispensation was to follow, a Dispensation not of Shadows, and Types, and Images, but of Truth, of Reality, and Accomplishment; a Dispensation not requiring Sacrifices of Lambs and Bulls, but such as



press'd spiritual Sacrifices and Oblations; a Dispensation not of Bondage and Slavery, but of Freedom and Liberty; a Dispensation which should be large and diffusive, not confining its Privileges and Influences to a single Nation, but spread them abroad to the Comfort of all the Inhabitants of the World. None drank of the Cup of the Passover, but Persons circumcis'd; but the Cup Christ takes here, all Nations, both circumcis'd and uncircumcis'd, were permitted to participate of; all Penitents, what Kindred, People, Tongue, or Nation soever they were of.

3. He took *this Cup* after the Paschal Cup, to shew there was greater Virtue and Excellency in this last, than there was in the first. After me, comes a Man, saith the *Baptist*, John 1. 30. *that is preferr'd before me, for he was before me.* So it may be said of the *Paschal Cup*: After that, came a Cup which was far more excellent, and glorious, and beneficial, than the other. *Christ* came after *Moses*, after the Law, after the Prophets, yet went beyond them all in Light, in Knowledge, in Virtue, in Goodness, and in bringing glad Tidings: And so the Passover, tho' it was before the Lord's Supper, yet doth this Supper of the Lord transcend the other by many Degrees, and both represents and confers sublimer Mercies than the roasted Lamb could do; for here the blessed Trinity manifests it self in greater Charms, than it did in the Baptism of the Lord Jesus, in which St. *John* saw the Heavens open, and the Holy Ghost descending on the Son of God, in the Shape of a Dove, and the Father compleating the stupendous Scene with an Acclamation, *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleas'd.* For in this Sacrament, the Holy Ghost falls on the Souls of sincere Believers, as Rain on the mowen Grass, and as the Showers that water the Earth: The everlasting Father not only tells us which is the beloved Son, but by setting his Son's Death before us, shews, that he lov'd us in a Manner better than his own Son, in giving that Son

to die for us; than which, nothing can be more kind, nothing more surprizing; the Son himself invites us, and offers to wash us from our Sins with his own Blood, and assures us, that being sprinkled with his Blood, we are safe and secure against all the Curses of the Law, and the Thunders of Mount *Sina*. These Things were Mysteries and Paradoxes in the Passover; but this Sacrament which came after it, opens the Door, and lets us in, to see this glorious Representation; and consequently is a richer, greater, holier, sublimer, and more heavenly Ordinance, than the Passover.

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*The preceding Considerations reduc'd to Practice.*

I. **A**mong the Heathen Poets, there is much Talk of *Circe's Cup*, which transform'd Men into Brutes and Swine; a Fable whereby they represented how sensual Pleasure transform'd Men into Creatures void of Reason and Discretion: But the Cup we speak of, hath contrary Effects, and Fire and Water are not more opposite than the Operations of these two; for this Sacramental Cup transforms Brutes into Men again, and changes Beasts into the Image of the Son of God. Sinner, make but a Tryal of it; thou, I mean, that hast not had so much Understanding as the Swallow, and the Turtle, and the Crane, for they know their appointed Times, whereas thou hast not known the Time of thy Return; thou that hast rush'd into Sin, as the Horse rushes into the Battel; thou that hast wallow'd in the Mire with the Swine, and acted like a Creature made of Earth and Dung: Take Courage, prepare thy self for drinking of this Cup; purify thy Soul, for profane Hands must not touch it; confess thine Iniquity, make War with thy Lusts, fight with thy carnal Desires, and drink of this Cup, and thou wilt find how thy Reason will clear up, how thy Understanding will be enlighten'd,

how thy beastly Qualities will die : The Blood in this Cup hath such Virtue in it, that it will transform thee by the renewing of the Mind, and make thee prove what is the holy, perfect, and acceptable Will of God. It's true, the bare drinking will not do it, but drinking it with Contrition, with Contemplation of the Person whose Blood is in the Cup, with Consideration of the Cause, viz. the Sins that spilt it, with Thankfulness for the infinite Mercy of him that thus freely parted with it, and with Resolutions to love him that did

*Petrus de Natalibus*, l. 5.  
21.

not think his own Blood too dear to let it flow for the Good of his Enemies. *Petrus de Natalibus* tells us of a Woman, who having labour'd many Years under very great Infirmities of Body, was brought exceeding weak; but drinking one Day accidentally out of the Cup that a holy Man, *Scion* by Name, did use to drink of, she was restor'd to perfect Health. Tho' we cannot promise, that this sacramental Cup will work such a Miracle on the Diseases of the Body, yet surely it will transform a Soul, sick to Death, into a lively and healthful Constitution; though, with the Woman in the Gospel, she hath lain under her Distemper a considerable Time.

*Herodot.* l. 4.

II. Among the *Scythians*, as *Herodotus* tells us, there was a Custom for the Princes of the Country to meet once a Year at a certain Feast, where a Cup was set upon the Table, a Cup of Honour, which none durst presume to drink of, but such as had signaliz'd their Valour in Battel, and kill'd more or less of their publick Enemies. Tho' this Sacramental Cup is too high, too sacred, and too lofty a Thing, to be compar'd with Cups us'd at the Feast of *Barbarians*, yet I may take Occasion, from hence, to tell you, that this holy Cup is fit for none to drink of, but such as have either shewn, or at least resolv'd to shew their Valour against their spiritual Enemies. Christian,



stian, if thou hast fought with the old Serpent, encounter'd with the hellish Dragon, wrestled with Powers and Principalities, express'd thy Courage against Temptations, defy'd *Goliath*, the Lyon, and the Bear, the World, the Devil, and the Flesh, or art resolv'd to be a Champion for thy God, and fight the Battels of the Lord; thou art that valiant Man that may drink of this Cup; thy God will give thee leave to drink of it with other Hero's, with the greatest Worthies, with Men of whom the World was not worthy; with Men whose Faith hath advanc'd them above the Stars, and who are to shine as the Sun in the Firmament, in their Father's Kingdom. Let no despairing Thoughts, no Suggestion of the Devil, no slavish Fear, no Pretence of Unworthiness, discourage thee from touching this Cup, or drinking of it. It's mingled for thee, for thee it is prepar'd; the King expects thee at this Feast, thou art call'd to this Banquet. Thus shall it be done to the Man whom the King of Heaven intends to Honour. What if thou hadst not slain thy Thousands with *Saul*, nor thy ten Thousands with *David*? What if thou hadst not brought thy two hundred Foreskins of the *Philistines* to thy Lord and Master, thou dost a greater Act in conquering thy Thoughts, thy Desires, thy Passions, thy Appetite, thy vain Imaginations, than if thou hadst lain Countries waste, ruin'd Kingdoms, or bound their Kings in Chains, and their Nobles with Fetters of Iron. *Such Honour have all his Saints.*

III. Hear this, thou fainting Soul! that groanest under the Burthen of thy Sins, goest heavy laden with Sorrow, and, like *Rachael*, wilt not be comforted; behold thy Lord and Master, touch'd with the feeling of thy Infirmities, and afflicted in all thy Afflictions; who waits to be gracious, and loves to converse more with a weeping Publican, than with a jovial *Herod*; he reaches forth a Cup to thee, a Cup of Joy, a Cup of

of Gladness, a Cup of Comfort. It is this Sacramental Cup, drink of it, thou thirsty Soul, why shouldst thou fear? This Cup is design'd for labouring Souls; they that have born the Heat and Burthen of the Day, are to taste of it. It is design'd to recreate, design'd to refresh, design'd to revive, design'd to support their Spirits. Dost thou believe this, Christian? Dare to believe it; take thy Saviour's Word for it, and triumph in the Promise. The Mercy may be too big for thee to ask, but not too big for him to grant. Thou hast a Master to deal withal, who gives like himself, like a King, like a Prince, whose Stores are inexhaustible! Let no *Senacharib* deceive thee; regard not what such a *Rabshakeb* says; hearken not to the frightful Stories of thine Enemies, who rejoyce to see thee discourag'd, are glad to see thee forbear drinking of this Cup, and think it their Interest to keep thee from that which may, and will give thee everlasting Health. I have read of a precious Stone, of considerable Value, that dropt, no Man knew how, into the holy Cup while the Priest was administering the Sacrament. There needs no precious Stone to drop into this Cup, to make it of a greater Value; that which is in it, is of greater Worth than ten thousand Worlds; it represents that which neither Pearls, nor Rubies, nor Diamonds, can counter-balance. The Papists boast much of the Gifts of their Popes; how *Sylvester* gave three golden Cups, to be us'd in the Celebration of the *Eucharist*; how *John the second* gave a Cup of Gold, weighing twenty Pounds; how *Gregory the second*, and *Leo the third*, presented their respective Churches with Cups all beset with precious Stones: What if thou canst bring no such Presents to God, thou bringest a better, when thou bringest a Spirit, a Heart, a Soul lamenting and mourning, because thou hast departed from him, contented thy self with a Form of Godliness, and under the Profession of Religion, hast deny'd him in thy Actions. A Heart touch'd with the Sense of the Unreasonableness,

ness, Odiousness, and Loathsomeness of all this, and finding a Relish in the Things of God, and of Salvation, qualifies a Man more for comfortable drinking of this Cup, than if, with the wise Man, he hath offer'd Gold, and Myrrh, and Frankincense to Christ Jesus. *Is not this Cup, whereby my Lord divineth, saith Joseph's Steward, Gen. xlv. 5. Christian,* by drinking of this Sacramental Cup, thou may'st divine thy future Happiness, guess at what will become of thee hereafter; make Conjectures of thy Glory, and conclude, that thou shalt feel the Comfort of drinking the Cordials of a blessed Eternity

The P R A Y E R.

**O** Jesu! Great Fountain of all Goodness! who didst drink of the bitter Cup which my Sins hath mingled! I am sensible there was no Sorrow like thy Sorrow, which was done unto thee, and wherewith the Lord afflicted thee in the Day of his fierce Anger. How was thy Spirit disturb'd! How sore amaz'd was thy Soul! How dismay'd thy Mind! To such an exceeding Heighth of Grief and Sorrow, did the Sense of the incumbent Load of my Sins, and the Prospect of Calamities hanging over my Head, together with the Reflection on my wretched Condition, skrew up thy Affections! Innumerable Evils encompass'd thee; thou sawest the Wrath of God flaming out against my Sin, and tremblest! Thou stoodst before the Mouth of Hell, which I had deserv'd, and wast astonish'd! Thou with thine own Heart-Blood didst quench the Wrath of Heaven! O how am I oblig'd to adore thy Love! O everlasting Father! what  
Charity



Charity was it not to spare thine own Son, but to deliver him up for us all ! What Pity and Compassion was it, O thou eternal Son of God, thus to pour forth thy Blood ! What Affection, what Tenderness to my Soul, O thou eternal Spirit, hast thou express'd in inspiring my 'blessed Redeemer with Charity more than Human, and in supporting him to undergo all Pressure with invincible Patience ! *If I forget thy Love, sweet Jesu, let my right Hand forget her Cunning !* What an Encouragement is here to believe thy Word, which I see so punctually accomplish'd ! The ancient Prophets foretold, that Christ should suffer, and so it came to pass ! Let me for ever believe thy Promises : In all Dangers, in all Troubles, in all Necessities, let thy Promises be for my Comfort ! Let me never mistrust thy Goodness, after so great an Instance of thy Goodness, as the Gift of thy Son must be ! How can I despair of Mercy upon unfeigned Repentance, when in this Passion, Mercy was drawn out to that Length on Purpose, that it might reach the greatest Sinners. O *Jesu !* thou hast defeated all mine Enemies ! Thou hast evacuated all the Obstacles of my Salvation ! Let me pretend and plead Excuses no more. Now let me run with Patience the Race which is set before me, the Way being open'd into the Holy of Holies ; encourage me to walk in it, with all that wait for the Salvation of God. Affect my Heart with a Religious Fear, and let thy humble Passion kill my Pride ! Let my Sins appear more dreadful  
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to me, when I contemplate thine Agonies ; and let the World, with all its deceitful Vanities, become loathsome to me, when I see how little thou didst regard it. Let every Thing die in me, that is not agreeable to thy Life, that when thou, who art my Life, shalt appear, I may also appear with thee in Glory. *Amen, Amen.*



CHAP.



## C H A P. XIV.

Of the Covenant represented by the Cup in this Holy Sacrament.

## The CONTENTS.

*A seeming Contradiction betwixt the Evangelists, reconcil'd the Greek Word, which we render Testament, prov'd to signify a Covenant too. The Manner of making Covenants in ancient Times, apply'd to the Covenant made in this Sacrament. The Difference between the Old and New Covenant discover'd. In this Sacramental Covenant, the Parties mutually engaging one to another, prov'd to be God and Man. Under what Notions both Parties are to be consider'd, explain'd. The Nature of this Sacramental Covenant, its Beginning, and first Rudiments in our Baptism; the Necessity of renewing it when we come to some Maturity of Understanding. Our Consent to it, and how that Consent must be qualify'd. This Covenant, if broken, after a due Ratification of it, whether it may be renew'd. What Things do not break or null it. What Sins they are, that make it void. How it may be renew'd by sincere Repentance, and what kind of Repentance it must be. Great Presumption to enter into a solemn Covenant with God, and not to consider the Weight and Importance of it. The great Misery and Wretchedness of Men, who are not actually in Covenant with God. How necessary it is for Persons, when young, to make or renew their Covenant. No impossible Thing to come to a rational Confidence that we are in Covenant with God. The Mercies and Advantages of being God's faithful Confederates. The Prayer.*

I. **C**Hrist, in describing the Nature of this Sacramental Cup, or the Wine in the Cup, tells us, as St. Matthew and St. Mark relate it, *This is my Blood of the*



the new Testament; or as St. Luke and St. Paul rehearse it, *This Cup is the New Testament in my Blood.* St. Luke being St. Paul's Companion in Travel, it's like the Apostle made use of St. Luke's Commentaries, which he had by him, tho' perhaps they were not yet publish'd to the World; nor must we therefore suspect a Contradiction in their different Expressions, for the Evangelists, in their Histories, do not always tie themselves to the very Number and Order of Words and Syllables which our Saviour spoke, but many times think it sufficient to express the Sense; and that the Sense is the same here, tho' the Expression be different, will easily appear to an impartial Reader, tho' it may be said, that Christ might very justly use both Expressions, one after another say that which St. Mark and St. Matthew mention, and afterwards that which St. Luke and St. Paul takes Notice of, by way of Explication; and for Brevity's Sake, one Evangelist might set down one, and another (the Sense being the same) another.

II. The Word which we render *Testament*, is in the Original *διαθήκη*, which indeed, in some few Places of Scripture, particularly *Heb. ix. 15.* is us'd for the last Will and Testament of a Testator, but for the most part stands for a *Covenant*, answering to the Hebrew *ברית* *Berith*, and imports a Compact, or Contract of two Parties mutually engaging to one another, to do and perform what is proper, convenient, and fit to be done; and this, by the Consent of all Interpreters, is the chief Signification intended here; and that which will give Light to this Notion, is, the Custom of the first Ages of the World: For Covenants in ancient Times, were usually made by the slaying of a Beast, and shedding its Blood, which was to put the Confederates in mind, that if they broke the Articles agreed upon, they must fear as base a Death as the Beasts did suffer, and Providence would not only take Notice of the Violation, and revenge it, but by the Ceremony they imprecated them-

themselves, that in Case they prov'd false to their Promise, such a sudden violent Death might seize on them. Among the more barbarous sort of Mankind, when in these Cases they had slain the Beast, they pour'd the Blood of the Hog, or Calf, or Ox, that was shed, into a Cup, and the Confederates drank of it, to make the Tye stronger, and the Execration more dreadful, and consequently more forcing. But the civiler Sort, after they had kill'd the Beast, to seal the Covenant, instead of Blood, fill'd the Cup with Wine, and the respective Parties drank of it, which they thought, and believ'd to be as obligatory as the other. In a Word, hereby both Parties express'd their Resolution and serious Intent to perform the mutual Engagements, and tacitly wish'd Death and Judgment to themselves, in case of Non-performance of the Articles: And tho' this cannot be apply'd in every Circumstance, to the Covenant made betwixt God and Man in every Particular, God not being capable of imprecating himself, and his Word being of greater Weight and Moment, than all the Oaths and Execrations Man can take, yet, from the Premises, we may easily guess that Christ alludes to these Practices of Mankind, in saying, *This is my Blood of the New Testament*; and that in this Sacrament, Men enter into a Covenant with God, or rather confirm the Covenant made betwixt God and them, by the Mediation of the Blood of *Jesus*, who was the innocent Lamb slain from the Foundation of the World; for it is with Regard to that Blood, that God is not only willing to enter, but actually enters into Compacts and Contracts with lapsed Man, and as in the fore-mention'd federate Rites and Ceremonies, the Parties engaging to one another, drank of the Blood of the slain Beast, or of the Wine, which was in lieu of that Blood, thereby to confirm their mutual Promises; so they that come to the holy Sacrament, are not only admonish'd by drinking of the Cup, or of the Wine in the Cup, representing the Blood of Christ, to enter into solemn Engagements and Promises

ses to be true and faithful to that God, who bought them at so dear a Price, as the Blood and Death of his own Son; but in actual drinking of it, profess and declare, that in Case they prove false and treacherous to their great Confederates, break their Promise wilfully, and allow themselves in it, that they deserve that everlasting Death and Damnation, from which that Blood was intended to deliver them; and besides, it is a tacit Imprecation too, if they be not true to their Engagements, that then those Agonies and Miseries, and dreadful Death, the Son of God endur'd, shall fall to their Share and Portion, which illustrates the Apostles Saying, 1 Cor. xi. 29. *He that eats and drinks unworthily, eats and drinks Damnation to himself.* But of this I shall have Occasion to treat professedly in the Sequel.

III. There is frequent mention made in Scripture of the *Old and New Covenant*. By the *Old* is meant the Covenant or Compact, God by the Ministry of *Moses* made with the *Israelites*, as they were a Commonwealth, whereof God himself was pleas'd to be the King and President. This Covenant was fitted to the slavish Temper of the People God had to deal withal; and as God promis'd them temporal Felicity, eating the Good of the Land, a plentiful Harvest, Increase of their Kine and Cattle, full Barns, and a rich Vintage, Multitude of Children, and Protection from their temporal Enemies; so it requir'd in the Confederates, or *Jewish* People, an exact Compliance of their outward Man, with the Precepts, Laws, and Statutes God appointed and gave them. The *New Covenant* is that Contract which God makes with Mankind in *Christ Jesus*, wherein he promises to admit sincere Believers into his special Favour, and, for Christ's sake, to bestow upon them the Riches of Grace and Glory; and on our Side, requires renouncing all Love to a sinful Life, and Resignation of our Souls, Spirits, and Bodies, to his Will and Government. It's call'd *New*, in Opposition to the



Civil or Political Covenant God made with the *Jewish* People, as they were a Nation immediately under his Jurisdiction; for both the Promises and Obedience under that Dispensation, were different from the Promises and Obedience of the other, one promising only temporal Blessings, and requiring external Obedience; the other promising spiritual and eternal Blessings, and requiring internal and sincere Obedience; and though the New Covenant, which God makes with the People under the Gospel, had it's Beginning already in *Adam's* Time, immediately after the Fall, and was again publish'd in the Days of *Abraham*; yet, notwithstanding all this, it may justly be call'd New, because of the clear and fuller Revelation of it, when *Christ*, the Foundation of it, appear'd, and by his Death confirm'd all the Predictions, Prophecies, Types, and Psefigurations of it, before and under the Law of *Moses*; for then was made a new Publication of it, new Witnesses were made use of, and new Motives and Encouragements were given, and new Sacraments, as Seals of that Covenant, were added. And this new Covenant, the Blood or Wine, the Emblem of it, in the Holy Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, relates to; and he that drinks of that Wine or Blood represented by it, confirms that Covenant, professes that he approves of it, will stand to it, and acknowledges the Justness of his Threatenings denounc'd against those who count this Blood of the Covenant an unholy Thing. Even the Civil and Political Covenant which God made with the People of the *Jews*, was solemniz'd by Blood, which is the Reason of that Passage, *Exod. xxiv. 7, 8. And Moses took the Book of the Covenant, and read it in the Audience of the People, and they said, All that the Lord hath said, will we do. And Moses took the Blood, and sprinkled it on the People, and said, Behold the Blood of the Covenant, which the Lord hath made with you, concerning all these Words.* And as in their suffering themselves to be sprinkled with that Blood, they declar'd their unfeign'd Assent and Consent to the Conditions

of that Covenant, and profess'd that it was just with God to inflict Death and Ruin upon them, if they did not study to obey that Covenant; so in the New Testament, in this Holy Sacrament, those that come to be Partakers of it, are sprinkled, as it were, with the invaluable Blood of Christ; and, by that, own their hearty Consent to the Conditions of the New Covenant, and ratify their Obedience, and God's Promises and Threatenings too, which are the Sanctions of this Covenant.

IV. In this Covenant, the Parties concern'd, are *God* and *Man*; yet from hence no Person is to conclude, that God stood in Need of this Alliance. We indeed had Need of it, and it was our Interest that God should do so. His vouchsafing to come to such a Contract, speaks his Goodness, and there is not a greater Argument of his Clemency and Compassion. He could have been Great, Glorious, and Magnificent without us, and what Need had he of the Friendship of such miserable Creatures as we are, that was All in All? His Excellency and Beatitude receive no Addition by this Covenant; and what had it been to him, if we had been left in the common Mass of Corruption and Perdition? What could he have lost by our eternal Groans, or what Disparagement could it have been to him, to let us sink into the Gulph, when our Sins and Offences were the meritorious Cause of it? It shews his infinite Goodness and Condescension, that he will enter into Promises and Engagements with his Creatures; and we are Brutes, if the Thoughts of his Mercy in this Particular, do not force our Tongues to break forth into Admiration of it. Our Misery and Wretchedness requir'd such a Favour, and without it we must have been as great Strangers to Happiness, as we were to Power and Ability to help our selves. Commiseration to our Poverty and undone Condition, mov'd the Almighty to come to Terms with us, and this Covenant is our Advantage and Emolument. God gets no Profit by it; and tho' it is a

Publication of his Goodness, and proclaims the Wonders of his Loving-kindness, yet God might have found out other Ways to manifest that; and it's we that are the Gainers by this Contract.

V. In this Covenant, God must not be consider'd only as an infinite, most perfect, and most excellent Being; but more particularly under that threefold Relation of *Father, Son, and Holy Ghost*. Man also is not only to be look'd upon as God's Creature, but as a *Sinner* fallen from God, apostatiz'd from Righteousness, and standing in Need of God's Help, Assistance, Grace, and Reconciliation, and as one who, of a Child of Wrath, is to be made a Child of God; of an Enemy, a Friend; of an Heir of Hell, an Heir of Heaven, and Co heir with *Christ*: And accordingly, this Sacramental Covenant is nothing else but a mutual Promise of an offended God, and the Offender, whereby both Parties do unfeignedly, and without Guile, or Fraud, or Equivocation, declare themselves willing, ready, and resolv'd to perform the Things agreed upon; God what he promises, and Man what he engages to do. For God, consider'd as the *Father everlasting*, promises here to treat us as his Children, to be tender of our spiritual and eternal Welfare, to seek our Good, and to turn all Things to our Good; to pass by the Unkindnesses and Indignities we have offer'd to him, to forgive, and throw them into the Depth of the Sea, to impute them no more, to count us innocent, to justify us here, and, like a Father, to provide an eternal Inheritance for us, *i. e.* to glorify us for ever. *The Son of God*, consider'd not only as the *eternal Wisdom* of the Father, but as *Mediator and Redeemer of the World*, promises to be our Intercessor and Advocate, with his Righteousness to cover our Infirmities, with his Wounds to cherish our Souls, to answer all the Arguments and Objections of the Devil against us, and to be our Friend, our Brother, our Shepherd, and our *new and living Way* to his Father's



Father's Bosom. The *Holy Ghost* doth promise to enlighten us, to be our Guide in the Dark, to comfort us in all our Tribulations, to teach us how to pray, to assure us of God's Love, to fill us with Joy in believing, to increase our Graces, to strengthen us in all Difficulties, to support us in our spiritual Dangers, to arm us with Arguments against Temptations, and to give us a Right to a future happy Resurrection. This is the mighty Promise God makes to poor Sinners in the Sacrament: On the other Side, we that come to the Table of our Lord, and do not intend to come in vain, do solemnly promise, particularly to the *eternal Father*, that we will own that Relation with Joy, and walk as his Children, not fashioning our selves according to our former Lusts in our Ignorance, but to be holy as he that hath call'd us, is holy; that we will no longer live like Rebels and Prodigals under the Name of Children, but make good that glorious Title by our Lives, shine as Lights in the World, and endeavour to be spotless and blameless, and by our Lives, and Actions, and good Works, glorify our Father which is in Heaven. We promise here to *God the Son*, and the *Great Redeemer*, that we will not only accept of his purchas'd Blessings, but submit to his Scepter too, and that he shall be not only our Saviour, but our Sovereign King and Master also, to whom we will think our selves oblig'd to submit in all Things that he shall say unto us in his Gospel, that his Life shall be the Pattern of ours, and his Example and Command shall do more with us than our Gain, or Appetite, or Interest; that we will be loyal to him, who redeem'd our Lives from Destruction, and will act as spiritual Subjects in his spiritual Kingdom. We promise also to *God the Holy Ghost*, that we will not only expect his Benefit and Comforts, but be guided by his Motions; that we will not resist his Checks and Reproofs, but hearken to them, whenever our Hearts do smite us; that we will not prefer the Dictates of a lying Devil, before his lively Oracles, nor join with the Motions

of our Flesh against his Intreaties and Obtestations; that we will make much of his gracious Visits, and take heed we do not by our Sins and Follies, defile the Temple of the holy Ghost; that we will cherish his kinder Influences, and take Care, that the Grace, and Talent he confers upon us, be not bury'd in the Earth, or laid up unless in a Napkin. And this is a *Scheme* of the solemn Covenant, a Believer, a Receiver, a Communicant enters into with the holy *Trinity*, in this tremendous Sacrament; a Covenant that ought to be more sacred than the Leagues of Princes, and more religiously observ'd than the Treaties and Engagements of the dearest Friends.

VI. This *Covenant* we enter into, first of all in our *Baptism*, when our Age is tender, our Desires innocent, and our Souls, like soft Wax, fit for any Impression, and consequently fit for the Impress of the divine Image; and tho' that Age be not capable of entering actually into a Covenant with the Lord of Heaven and Earth, yet it's enough that our Parents and Friends, who have Power over us, do then make this Covenant with God for us, dedicate us to his Service, appoint us Candidates of Holiness, and consecrate us early to the Performance of the Conditions requir'd in this Covenant; a Charity just, and a genuine Effect of paternal Care, which, as it loves the Child should share in their temporal Enjoyments, so it cannot but desire it should participate of the Blessings of this Covenant; and since these Blessings are not to be had without the Obligation of Faith, Repentance, and Obedience, tho' the Child cannot actually exercise these Virtues, yet being offer'd to God upon these Conditions, the Parents do not only shew their good Will to have the Child enroll'd in the Book of Life, but lay the strongest Obligations on the Child, to stand to the Terms of the Covenant, when it comes to display the Glory of its rational Faculties; and therefore may expect an actual Conveyance of  
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the spiritual Blessings of this Covenant to the Child, by the secret Operations of the holy Ghost; which Blessings the Child hath a Right to, 'till entic'd by Lust, and the Vanity of the World, it grows proud, rebellious, and shakes off the Conduct of its Guide, viz. the Spirit of the *holy Jesus*; for, God knows, the World and the Devil watch the first rising of the Sun; I mean, the first Appearances of Reason, and seek to obscure and darken them by Mists of Sensuality, into which Pit, the young Man, that was in his Infancy dedicated to God, too often falls, and there lies and sleeps, and many times awakes not 'till Death summons him to the dreadful Bar of Heaven. Where it is so, that the Covenant we enter'd into in the Morning of our Days, is forgotten, slighted, and polluted with Filthiness, and Superfluity of Nautiness; what can we think, but that the intended Blessings of the Covenant cease and die, and are withdrawn from the degenerate Creature; and the Promises of God being our *Father*, our *Saviour*, and our *Comforter*, are null'd, at least the Performance of them suspended, 'till the Apostate comes to himself again? This early Perfidiousness, too common, and too general, discovers the absolute Necessity of renewing this Covenant, when we are able to understand the Greatness and Importance of the Contract, and to enter into that Bond in our own Persons, especially in the Supper of the Lord, and there solemnly to engage our Souls to the Performance of the Conditions requir'd on our Side, upon which, what God hath graciously promis'd, will effectually be perform'd again: An offer not to be slighted, for it is an Argument of infinite Patience and Goodness, that God will give the Backslider Leave to enter into the broken Covenant, and will, upon that Return, let the still Streams of his Promises flow in, and water his Soul again; so that if this Opportunity be neglected, we know not the Treasures of Wrath we heap up against our selves, for it looks like Resolution to die, and to be miserable.



VII. That God consents to this Covenant unfeign'dly, we need not doubt; and that what he promises, he intends to fulfil, we may be confident of, since we have his Word for it, and his Nature is such, that he cannot lye. The great Danger lies on our Side, who are very mutable Creatures, and apt either to equivocate in our Consent, or to consent only by halves, or to forget the Terms we have consented to. It's fit therefore I should explain the Nature of that Consent we give, or are to give, in this Covenant, especially at the Table of our Lord, where the sacred Cup, fill'd with the Blood of Christ, at once represents God's Willingness to enter into a Covenant with us, and invites us to accept of the Offer; and our drinking of it, shews we actually consent to all the Terms of this Covenant. Therefore, to prevent Hypocrisy in this Consent, I must tell you, that this Consent must be,

1. *Deliberate*, and the Effect of Consultation. Sometimes a melancholy Humour seizes upon our Spirits, and not knowing how to ease our selves, we try whether Religion will not qualify our Trouble, and then we are consenting to this Covenant, tho' we cannot tell why, or how; whence it comes to pass, that if Religion doth not presently cure our Melancholy, we grow weary, and throw it off again. Most Men have sometimes a religious Fit upon them; and when either something hath cross'd their Designs, or a Disaster hath put them into Discontent, they are, during that Paroxysm, resolv'd to consent: But as it was a sudden Motion, without a good Foundation; so it soon withers and comes to nothing. It's necessary therefore we should take Pains to understand what this Covenant means, what Consent God requires, how reasonable and just that Consent is, what a Privilege it is that God will admit us into such a Compact, what the Things are he requires on our Part, and how necessary it is he should require such at our Hands; and after we have counted the Cost, and seen, and thought, and consulted, what this unfeign'd

feign'd Consent will stand us in, and weigh'd both the Advantages, and Inconveniences; then, in the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ, freely and chearfully to agree to the Conditions requir'd in this Covenant; this is a Consent, which, in Imitation of the great Planet of the Day, is like to go on to a perfect Day.

2. This Consent must be *heartty*, the Intent strong, and the Desire vigorous to perform the Conditions of this Covenant; such a Consent as he gives, that for a considerable Reward, promises to do what we put him upon: He fully designs it, he knows nothing that should hinder him; his Heart, his Mind, his Affections, are bent upon the doing of it, for the Reward presses upon his Understanding, and the Greatness of that, gives Force and Resolution to his Will and Desire. Here must be us'd no under-hand Dealings; God is not to be put off with Complements: The young Man that said, *I go, Sir, but went not*, Matth. 21. 28. stands branded for a Hypocrite. A full Purpose of Heart is requisite in this Case; as serious a Purpose as Men have, when under great Hopes or Fears, which are most likely to make their Purpose invincible. To consent to walk as Sons of God, to embrace the Lord Jesus as our King, to prefer the Motions of God's Spirit, before the Suggestions of the Flesh; I say, to consent to all this, and not to intend very seriously to act accordingly, is to impose upon God, at least to act as if we would do so, and to slight his Omniscience or to carry our selves as if he did not know our Down-sitting, and our Up-rising, or did not understand our Thoughts afar off, which is impious.

3. This Consent ought to be *impartial* and entire, even to all the Parts of the Conditions express'd or understood in this Covenant: Here must be no accepting of *Christ* by halves, but our Affections must embrace him, both as a *Ruler*, and a *Friend*; to accept of the *Sweets* of his *Sufferings*, and to refuse his *Toke*; to rejoyce in his *Mercies*, and to reject his *Law*; or to be willing to submit to some of his *Laws*, and to take *Liberty* as to others,

others, is, to divide Christ, and to part his Offices, or to hold both with Christ, and with the Devil. A King had as good have no Subjects, as disobedient Subjects; and to what Purpose had all that costly Method of the Son of God, to purchase a People to himself, been, if the Intent had not been to make them subject to his Will and Power? That there might be no Dispute about this Point, the Apostle hath left it upon Record, *Heb. 5. 9. That he became the Author of eternal Salvation, to them that obey him*: And there needs no great *Logick*, to infer from hence, that no Man hath a Right or Title to Salvation, 'till he actually and sincerely obeys him, and obeys him in all that he requires; for he that obeys partially, doth not obey in a Scripture Sense. We our selves do not much affect Servants that are only for what they can get, and care not how little Work they do; and God, to be sure, hath no Reason to look upon those, as true Confederates, that consent only to be made happy by the Death of Christ, but are loath to die to the Vanities of this World, or to admit his Kingdom and Empire into their Souls; so that he that truly consents to this Covenant, must consent not only to enjoy the Comforts of a Saviour, but that Christ shall be Master of his Will, Desires, and Affections, that these shall be at his Beck, move by his Order, and be manag'd according to his Direction.

4. This Consent must not only respect our future Seriousness and Conscientiousness, but *express our present Designs and Inclinations*. As in Marriage, so in this Covenant, it must be a present Consent that ratifies the Contract; and as in the former, *I take thee for my wedded Wife*, and, *I take thee for my wedded Husband*, makes the matrimonial Compact valid; so in this, present agreeing to the Terms propos'd and requir'd, makes a Man a welcome Confederate, and unites and knits him to God who enters into solemn Engagements in this Covenant, to discharge the Offices of a kind Husband to us: And, *O God, the Father of Heaven, I*



do here most humbly offer and tender unto thee my filial Affection: O God the Son, Redeemer of the World, I am content to be thy loyal Subject, and to be govern'd and rul'd by thy holy Laws: O God the holy Ghost, proceeding from the Father and the Son, I take thee for my Guide and my Counsellor, by whose Advice I mean to steer my Course. Such present Declarations of our Consent, admit us to the Blessings of this Covenant; so that he who enters in this Covenant, and is not willing presently, and without Delay, to discharge the Conditions of it, uses Tergiversations, and equivocates with God; and tho' a Man may intend that some Time hereafter, when he is freer from Business, more clear in the World, hath fewer Divertisements, and is more at Leisure, he will not fail to perform all that is requir'd of his Part, yet that will not satisfy, nor answer the Design of this Agreement; for who knows what he shall do hereafter? The present Time is only in our Power; and he that is not presently resolv'd, is not likely, considering the Temptations he may meet withal, to do any great Matters for God, or for his Soul, hereafter.

5. This Consent must be *absolute*, or, which is all one, *without Reserves*. Secret Conditions have no Place here: And that Man is not fit for the *Kingdom of God*, that desires first to bury his Father, or to take his Leave of his Friends and Relations, and then to follow Christ, Luke 9. 59, To consent to this Covenant, and to reserve any one darling Sin; to consent to the Performance of the Conditions, with Exception of a single Lust, which our Place, Calling, or present Circumstances, will not let us part withal, is a Sign the Heart is not upright with God, and a Man hath not that high Esteem of God's Grace and Favour, he ought to have. The Soul must come naked to the Cross of Jesus: Here must be no Bargainings with a tremendous Majesty; no Proviso's, as Pharaoh made with the Children of Israel, when he was to let them go; he was content the elder People should march and sacrifice to their God, but the little Ones

Ones he would have staid. God must not be told in this Covenant, *Lord, if thou wilt, let me enjoy this Piece of Pride, or give me Leave to vindicate my Honour, by avenging my self: If thou wilt, let me comply with such a sinful Man's Humour; wilt let me flatter him, or dissemble with him for my Profit and Interest: Or if I thrive and prosper in my Trade, Profession, and Employment: If I may enjoy temporal Felicity, and live as happily as my Neighbours, I freely consent to all the rest that thy Power and Greatness expects at my Hands.* For this is to contradict the Design of this Covenant, which is, to make us entirely his. And that no Man may stroke himself with a Fancy, that he never made, and never intends such formal Exceptions in his Consent, I must add, that where a Person doth actually reserve such Things, whether he doth formally and expressly except them or no, the Case is the same, and is as much as if such formal Exceptions had been made in our entering into this Covenant; whatever our Lot or Fortune may be in the World, whatever Inconveniencies may happen in the strict Observance of this Contract, those must be overlook'd, for the greater Benefits offer'd us on God's Part in this Covenant,

VIII. But here a Question will arise, *If this Covenant be broken, after it is thus ratify'd or establish'd in the Lord's Supper, whether, or how it may be renew'd?* To give a satisfactory Answer to this Point, I shall lay down what is fit to be said to it, in these following Particulars.

1. By *breaking this Covenant*, I mean, to make it null, not only on our Side, but also on God's Part, so that we can have no Assurance, no Hope, no rational Confidence, that God loves us any longer as his Confederates, as his Friends and Children, or with a Love of Complaisency, or that he is our reconcil'd Father, or that we are dear to him, and Heirs of Heaven, or that the Promises of the Gospel belong to us; in a Word, so to make it void, as to put our selves in the same Condition

tion we were in before ever we had any Thoughts of giving our selves up to Almighty God in a formal Covenant, so as to become Objects of God's Wrath and Indignation; to whom is reserv'd the Blackness of Darknels for ever. This being premis'd,

2. Every Thing that clouds or darkens the Comforts arising from a Sense of our being in Covenant with God, cannot, must not, presently be interpreted a total Breach of it; there are many sincere *Christian Isralites* indeed, in whom there is no considerable Guile, who either, thro' Weakness of Understanding, or thro' some bodily Distemper seizing on their nobler Parts, or for want of consulting with some consciencious Divine, or thro' vehement Assaults of the Devil, may not feel the Streams of Consolation which formerly us'd to flow into their Souls, from the cheerful Apprehensions they had of their being united to God by a solemn Covenant, who yet still go on to fulfil the Conditions of this holy Contract, and are exceeding cautious of offending, or acting against the Laws of it; and most certainly, the Mists and Fogs which obscure and dull the Brightness of their Comforts, are no Arguments of their having made void this Covenant, or that God's paternal Affection to their Souls is gone: For tho' they may even complain, with *Zion*, that *the Lord hath forsaken them, and their God hath forgotten them*, yet still they are Children of Light in the Midst of Darknels; and were but the Noise of Temptation over, or the Distemper, which discomposes them, abated, they would soon hear God speaking to them in the Language of a Father, *Can a Woman forget her sucking Child, that she should not have Compassion on the Fruit of her Womb? Tea, they may forget, yet will not I forget thee: Behold, I have engraven thee on the Palms of my Hands*, *Es. 49. 15.*

3. No unallow'd of Miscarriages, I mean, Miscarriages against the settled Bent and Resolutions of our Souls, can be said to null this Covenant: For God promising in this Covenant, to be a tender and gracious Father



to us in Christ Jesus, we must needs suppose, that as a Father pities his own Children, so the Lord takes Pity on them that fear him, as we read *Psal. ciii. 13.* Therefore, as a Father, who hath an obedient Son, if he hear him speak a rash Word, or see him do an imprudent Act he was never guilty of before, and perceives him blushing as soon as he hath done it, which shews the Error was not in his Nature, or the Effect of an evil Habit, but caus'd by some Accident, or before he was aware, and consequently doth not thereupon presently cast him off, or turn him out of Doors, or withdraw the Affections and Inclinations of a Father from him; so neither doth God from his dear Confederates, if sometimes by Surprise they are overtaken in a Fault, upon which their Hearts immediately smite them, and they take Shame to themselves; for this shews that it was not Temper, but Temptation, that caus'd this Fall, and that it was against the Bent and settled Inclinations of their Souls.

4. Neither do *blasphemous Suggestions* null this sacred Covenant: By these, I mean not wilful Blasphemies, or reviling of God, the Effects of Malice, Hatred, and Enmity against God, of Aversion from Goodness, and inveterate Wickedness in the Soul; for these are Characters of a Man's being in Covenant with the Devil, and at Agreement with Hell: But by blasphemous Suggestions are understood here, sudden Representations of Things horrid, monstrous, and unnatural to our Minds, which favour of Blasphemy, come in unforeseen and unlook'd for, and look indeed like our own Thoughts, but are not, but in good Truth are Injections of the Devil, who shoots and darts such dismal Things into our Understandings or Imaginations, contrary to our Will, Desire, Liking, and Approbation: Of these tedious and troublesome Guests, not a few Persons do complain, who with great Seriousness apply themselves to the real Practice of Godliness. The Enemy of Souls, being no longer able to sooth them up in carnal Security,

rity, and finding them weary of the Yoke of Sin, betakes himself to this Stratagem, and tries, by such Suggestions and Assaults, to drive them to Despair; for they are Things dreadful, and such as both Nature, and Grace, and Conscience, tremble at; and very strange Effects they have in many Christians, that are ignorant of these Devices: They make them rise from Prayer, assault them at the very Altar, disturb their warmest Devotions, and many times tempt them to Self-murder; and the Patient frequently thinks, that a Hell is begun in his Bosom, that he is possess'd, and hath a Legion with him. They come in like Lightning, and cause such Confusion in the Thoughts, that the tempted Christian thinks none so miserable as himself. These Suggestions, while they are resisted, detested, oppos'd, flighted, abhor'd, and protested against, do not null this Covenant, because they are Things we cannot help, nor doth it lie in our Power to hinder the Devil from trying Experiments and Conclusions upon us: All we have to do, is, not to consent, or not to yield to them, and thereby we establish the Covenant. Nor,

5. Doth Want of such a Degree, either of Joy or Sorrow, null this comfortable Covenant. There are many sincere Believers, who, either because they cannot weep so much for their Offences, as *David* and *Peter*, and *Mary Magdalen*, or cannot raise their Affections to that Pitch of Life, and Joy, and Briskness, that other Constitutions can in Things devotional and spiritual, are apt to conclude they have no Share in the Comforts of this Covenant: And the Argument they commonly make use of to prove the Inference, is, because, did God love them as his Children, he would give them the same spiritual Blessings he gives to others. But this Consequence is weak, for tho' God doth promise, and give to all his Children Grace, and his Holy Spirit, and inclines their Hearts to his Testimonies, and whoever are of the Number of true Children of God, we may confidently affirm, they have the Love of God shed

shed abroad in their Souls ; yet God hath no where promis'd, that all his Children shall have the same Degrees of Grace, much less the same Degrees of Joy and Sorrow : For as *there is one Glory of the Sun, another of the Moon, and another Glory of the Stars ; and one Star differs from another Star in Glory*, to use the Apostle's Expression, 1 Cor. xv. 41. so also it is in the Resurrection of the Soul, from the Death of Sin, all are made Partakers of the Grace of God, but all have not the same Degrees of Grace ; and the Degrees of spiritual Joy and Sorrow differ too.

1. Because God hereby encourages, and would encourage the Industry of his Children. Greater Degrees of Grace, are Rewards of the Indulgent, and the Laborious have these Baits laid before them. God crowns the Pains of his fervent Lovers with these Laurels, and the harder a Soul works in the Lord's Vineyard, the higher they are advanc'd in this spiritual Kingdom, as we may guess from the Parable of the Talents, *Mat. xxv. 20, 21.* And of this, the very Heathens were sensible, when they made it a standing Maxim, *That the Gods sold all their Gifts for Labour and Industry* : Not to mention, that some Vessels are more capacious, and will hold more than others, and the larger the Soul is, the more it will contain.

2. That all have not the same Degrees of Joy and Sorrow ; the Reason is, because God gives not to all his Children Constitutions alike, upon which the external Expressions of Joy and Sorrow do very much depend. If Grace meets with a moist Constitution, or affectionate Temper, it makes the Eyes flow in stronger Currents, and fills those Channels with larger Streams of Tears, which a more even Temper is not capable of. So, if it mingle with a sanguine and chearful Complexion, the Joys in spiritual Things must necessarily rise higher than in Persons of a heavy or melancholy Constitution. Grace doth not alter the Constitution, but directs it. It gives not a new Habit of Body, but disposes



poses the Habit it finds, to exert and vent it self in Matters of Religion, suitably to its Nature. Should all arrive at the same Degrees of Joy and Sorrow, God must be at the Charge of a Miracle every Day, for he would be oblig'd to alter the several Constitutions, which, as he doth not think fit to do, so neither is it reasonable Men should expect it; and from hence it's evident, that a Believer may sincerely fulfil the Conditions of this Covenant, and yet want the same Degrees of Joy and Sorrow he sees in others; and consequently this Want doth not null the Covenant.

6. All Sins allow'd of, do certainly null this Covenant, whether they be great or small; by Sins allow'd of, I mean not only Sins committed deliberately against Knowledge, and the Dictates of Conscience, but Sins also we live, or go on in, without Remorse, or a rational Care to be rid of them, and that such Sins as seem inconsiderable in the Eyes of the World; these, as well as those of a larger size, if allow'd of, do null this Covenant, is manifest, partly from hence, because they put the Scul into a State of Enmity against God; which Enmity destroys the Relation between Father and Child; for to be wilful in doing that which I know, or may easily know will displease my Father, is pure Rebellion, not the Error of a Child, a Spot of a Leopard, not that of a Son of God; partly, because these little Sins, dandled and allow'd of, are expressly said to exclude from the Kingdom of Heaven, or, which is all one, to make a Man least in the Kingdom of Heaven, which Kingdom is the great Blessing promis'd in this Covenant; for so we read, *Matth. 5. 19. Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least Commandments, and shall teach Men so, either by Word, or by his Example, he shall be call'd the least in the Kingdom of Heaven.* And the Reason why even Sins which People make nothing of, such as calling their Neighbours Rogue and Fool, without a just Cause, lascivious Desires and Appetities, and revengeful Actions, &c. have so

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severe a Sanction annex'd to them, if they be cherish'd and lov'd, is this, because the less they are, the sooner, and the more easily they are avoided; and therefore it must argue strange Aversion from God, not to oblige him in so small a Thing; and that Men, after they have enter'd into this solemn Covenant at the Table of the Lord, may be allur'd and entic'd by Temptations, and perswaded to allow themselves in known Sins, both great and small, and thereby null the Covenant, we have no Reason to question, since Experience is beyond all Witnesses in the World.

7. The only Plank left us, after the Covenant is thus broken and null'd, to swim out of the Gulph of Perdition, and to regain God's Favour, is confess'd on all Hands, to be a true and deep Repentance, and particularly a Repentance attended with Fasting, Alms, and great future Self-denials. In the *stricter Ages* of Christianity, especially in the second and third Centuries, it was very much question'd, whether a Person who had solemnly and deliberately enter'd into a Covenant with God, either in Baptism, or in the Lord's Supper, if afterwards he fell into some of these three Sins, Adultery, Murther, or Idolatry, was capable of regaining the Favour of God promis'd in this Covenant. The *African Churches*, especially, were very stiff in this Point, yet the more moderate allow'd of a second Repentance, reckoning the first to be that which had been made by adult Persons in either of these Sacraments; and the second, if after a new Fall, or wilful Precipitation into any of these Crimes, he rose again with very great Purposes and Resolutions; but if a Man fell again into any of these Sins, after the second Repentance, they look'd upon the third as impossible. Others, though they did not exclude the Persons thus fallen, totally from the Possibility of God's Favour and Salvation, in case he repented, either the second or third Time, yet did not think fit to receive him again into the Communion of the Church; and this, which the *African Fathers* look'd up-

on only as a Thing convenient, *Novatus* enrag'd, its like, because he could not be made a Bishop, improv'd into absolute Necessity, which made his Followers exclude all such Persons as were fallen after their first Repentance, into any of these Sins, from their Communion. That which gave Occasion to this Doctrine, was, their too rigid Interpretation of some Places of Scripture, particularly that of *Heb. 6. 4, 5, 6.* and the other 1 *John 5. 16.* which Places are to be understood rather of a malicious denying the Faith, and forsaking the very Profession of Christianity, and turning Jew, Heathen, or Infidel, than of the aforesaid Acts of Sin: The *Roman Church* was the first that receiv'd such Sinners, after a tedious and laborious Repentance, into their Communion again; for which *Tertullian* expostulates with the *Bishop of Rome*, and accuses him of Rashness, Imprudence, and Breach of the ancient Canons. However, since the *Apostle* himself, 2 *Cor. 2. 7.* receiv'd the incestuous Person into the Communion of the Church of *Corinth*, and desir'd the *Corinthians* to do the like, after a sufficient Demonstration of his Repentance, and gave him Hopes of Pardon, and being reconcil'd to God, we must grant, that if the Repentance, after such Falls into wilful and habitual Sins, be sincere and true, exemplary and laborious, that there is just Hopes such a Person may renew his Covenant, get a Title again to the Promises of it, and be re-admitted to God's Favour and Complacency. But then,

1. This Repentance ought to be speedy: To live long in such Sins, after the first wilful Breach of this Covenant, is dangerous; hardens the Heart, gives the Devil greater Power over the Soul; and the Person thus sinning, knows not but he may be given up to Hardness of Heart, and to a reprobate Mind, in which Condition he may be snatch'd away by Death, and hal'd to the great Tribunal.

2. Such a Person must not make a Trade of repenting and sinning, for if he fall often into the same Sin, and still pretends to repent, it's a Sign the Repentance is counterfeited, his Love to God fickle and insincere, his Re-



sistances of God's Spirit strong, and the inward Man left without a Guard to secure it against the Assaults of the Devil.

3. Upon this new Repentance, greater Watchfulness than ordinary must be used, and the Penitent must become a Gainer by his Sins, *i. e.* the Dreadfulness of his Fall must help toward the great Exemplariness of his Life; and the Sins he hath liv'd in, must make him dread them now more than ever. A very signal Growth in Grace must succeed his Fall; and the Ball having been struck against the Ground, must now rebound the higher. His Time must now be redeem'd, and he that hath been so careless, must now double his Diligence. He must therefore love much now, because he expects much should be forgiven him; and his greater Fervour in Religion, is the best Demonstration of his unfeign'd Return from his Apostacy.

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*The Preceeding Considerations reduc'd to Practice.*

I. **I**T must needs be great Presumption, for Men and Women to enter into a solemn Covenant with God in this Sacrament, and not to consider the Weight and Importance of it. Christian, when thou enterest into this Covenant with the Holy Trinity, thou solemnly obligest thy self, that as thou hopest for Heaven and Happiness, as thou hopest for Pardon and Salvation, as thou hopest to have thy Sins wash'd away with the precious Blood of Christ, thou wilt take Christ's Yoke upon thee, endeavour to be humble and meek, as he was, learn of him, and die to the World, crucify thy Lusts and Affections, fight against the Vanities of the World, and labour to conform to the great Example of that Saviour, that spilt his dearest Blood for thee. Either thou understandest what this Engagement means, or thou dost not: If not, how darest thou touch the sacred Elements with polluted Hands? If thou understandest it,  
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and art not firmly resolv'd to take Care to perform what thou promist so solemnly, how dost thou think to escape the Judgment of God? Art thou afraid of breaking a solemn Promise made to a Prince and great Man, whose Smile or Frown can either help or prejudice thee much, and art thou not afraid of violating thy Engagements to the Great God of Heaven? What dost thou make of God? Dost thou take him to be some Heathen Deity, that hath Eyes, and sees not, Ears, and hears not? Dost thou oblige thy self to be his Subject, and dost thou turn Rebel? His Child, and become a Prodigal? His Confederate, and conspire against him with his Enemies? Dost thou take him for thy Lord, and wilt not thou do what he saith? If these thy unfaithful Dealings with thy Lord and Master, be enter'd into God's Book of Accompts, as certainly they are, and the black Roll shall at last be open'd, and read in thine Ears, dost not thou think what Terror, Amazement, and Confusion thou wilt be in? O Sinner! there is no jesting with such Bonds and Obligations. The God thou hast to deal withal, is a jealous God; and if these Engagements cannot oblige thy Soul to a serious Conversation, they'll be Witnesses to promote and hasten thy Condemnation.

II. See here, what a miserable and doleful State it is, not to be in Covenant with God: He that is not, hath no Security from the Wrath of God; the Threatnings of the Gospel are in force against him, and he knows not how soon the Thunder-bolt will fall upon his Head: Like a condemn'd Malefactor, he is repriev'd for a while, and can promise himself a Share only of the common Blessings which the Great Creator bestows indifferently upon his Friends and Enemies. Not to be in Covenant with him, is to be dead to his paternal Grace and Favour, and to be depriv'd of those Influences which make the Saints joyful in Glory, and cause them to sing aloud upon their Beds. 'Till you are in Covenant with your God, you can have no Hopes of Pardon, your Sins

remain upon you, and that Load will crush you at last into Despair. O! think of it, you that never made such a Covenant with your God in good earnest; nor being in Covenant with him, Christ's Blood, and Death, and Wounds, and Agonies, do not profit you. And for you, O! miserable Creatures, Christ dy'd in vain; that Damnation Christ came to deliver the World from, continues to be your Portion; and should you die in that Condition, you are undone to all Intents and Purposes. Till you are in Covenant with God, you are under the Power of Darkness, and under the Government of the worst of Tyrants; you are Slaves in the midst of all your Jollities, Bond-men in the midst of your Pleasures: You laugh in Chains, triumph in your Fetters, and stand upon the Brink of Destruction. O! do not make light of this unhappy State; your making light of it, speaks you desperate; but being concern'd at your Danger, may yet be a Means to free your selves from the Net you are at present entangled in: Fear of being undone, may yet keep you from it; and Sorrow that you have not seriously thought of it, may yet turn the Stream, and convert the Heart of God to you into Mercy and Compassion; therefore it is, that we instruct you in Meekness, if God, peradventure will give you Repentance to the acknowledging of the Truth, and that you may recover your selves out of the Snare of the Devil, who have been taken captive by him at his Will, 2 Tim. 2:26.

III. From hence it appears how necessary it is for People, when young, to make or renew this Covenant with their God: As no Man can close too early with the Offers of Grace; So, if this Covenant were made by all young Men and Women seriously, and with Deliberation, what a Restraint would it be upon their juvenile Desires! What a Curb to their extravagant Fancies! What an Armour against Sin, and the ill Examples of the World! How would this considerate Engagement keep



keep them in, and fright them from consenting, when Sinners do entice them! The Reason why it hath not this Effect upon them, is, because it is not made with suitable Application of the Mind to the Importance of it, or to the Greatness and Majesty of that God with whom it is made, and to the Danger and Hazard they run, in breaking of it for every Trifle that comes in their Way, and when they have made it, they do not keep their Hearts warm by ruminating upon what they have done, nor do they renew it so often as they might and should do. Were it preserv'd fresh, and green, and flourishing in their Minds, it would harden them against the Impression of all those little Allurements which now draw their Affections and their Souls another Way: Did they think, when a sinful Shew, when vain Company, when a glosing Pleasure, when a base Suggestion invites them to consent, *I have wash'd my Feet, how shall I defile them again! I have given my self up to the Disposal of him, to whom all Power in Heaven and Earth is given, how can I be faithless, and escape his Anger! I have in this Sacrament made a Resignation of my Heart to him, that rescu'd me from the burning Lake, how shall I break with him, and escape his Displeasure! I have consecrated my self to a greater Master, how shall I debase my self, and serve such pitiful Nothings! I have but one Soul, and have given that away to my Redeemer, how shall I espouse this Vanity! I have promis'd Obedience to him that wash'd me with his Blood, how shall I obey his Enemies!* Such Thoughts as these repeated often, would make the Heart inflexible to all the charming Intreaties of the World or the Devil; and Oh! that you would but make this Tryal, you would find that we are not mad, but speak the Words of Truth and Soberness, as St. Paul told Festus, in a Case not much unlike this, *Acts 26. 25.*

IV. It's no very difficult Thing to come to a holy Certainty, and Assurance, that we are in Covenant with God. It must needs be difficult to the Unwilling; and to him that hopes, God's Favour will fly into his Mouth with-

without seeking it, any Thing seems hard; and if it were difficult, the Difficulty is not insuperable, especially if we look into the Conditions of the Covenant. There is no Man that is in his Wits, but may, upon a diligent Search, find, and know, whether he heartily agrees to the Conditions, and whether he promises what is requir'd on his Part, out of Love to the Ways of Religion, and whether he makes Conscience of performing his Promises. It's true, the Heart is deceitful; but that it is so, is our own Fault; we may remedy that Deceitfulness, if we will search it, and, by the Rules Christ hath prescrib'd in the Gospel, bring it into Order. It is not to be imagin'd that God would leave us in Uncertainties, in so great a Concern as this; and he that bids us apply the Comforts of this Covenant, must be suppos'd to have left us Signs and Characters, whereby we may know that we are Confederates with him, and have a Right to what he hath said he'll do for us; and there can be no greater Character, than the Testimony of our Conscience, that our Engagements influence our Spirits, keep us in Awe, prevail with us to be cautious, and can do no more with us than a base Lust, or any sinful Gain or Pleasure. If thou freely resign'st thy self to the Guidance and Direction of thy Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier, and the Love of God, manifested in this Covenant, works upon thine Affections, and thou art content to be rul'd by his Law, art sensible of the Equity and Reasonableness of it, consentest to his Injunctions, not only professest Subjection, but actually endeavourest to submit to what he commands, and art willing, without any Reserves, that not only thine Understanding, Will, and Desires, but thine outward Man too, thine Eyes, and Ears, and Feet, and Gestures, and Behaviour, thy Reason, Memory, and Passion, should all be at his Beck, move by his Prescription, act according to his Appointment, be season'd with his Grace, and conducted by his Wisdom: If thou art content that all shall go, rather than his Favour; if his Love, or a Share in it, be dearer to thee than

than the dearest of all outward Enjoyments; be of good Cheer, it's a good Sign, and thou may'st rationally infer, that thou art in Covenant with thy Lord, and hast a Right to all the Privileges that are annex'd to it for thy Encouragement.

V. And here we may justly reflect what a Mercy it is to be in Covenant with God; a Mercy indeed which no Tongue can express, nay, no *Apollos* neither, as eloquent as he was, can describe; no *Tertullus*, no *Cicero*, no *Demosthenes* represent according to its Worth; a Mercy which no Man knows, save he who receives it; a Mercy which fills the Tongues of departed Saints with Praises; a Mercy which unhappy Souls, that groan among Devils, would give Millions for, if they had them; a Mercy which sweetens all Conditions, makes Sickness easy, and Iron-Chains sit soft; mitigates Pain, and tempers Grief and Anguish; a Mercy which made the penitent Publican stand confounded, amaz'd the humble *Magdalen*, caus'd *St. Paul* to go cheerfully through Stripes and Imprisonment, and encourag'd the Believers of Old to defy Death and Torments. He that is in Covenant with God, enjoys all that the Son of God enjoys, though not as yet in Fruition and Possession, yet in Title and Reversion; God the Father carries him on his Wings, as the Eagle doth her Young, the eternal Son of God is his faithful Friend; the holy Spirit of God speaks to him in the still Voice of Peace and Comfort. He that is in this Covenant, is safe in the midst of Spears and Arrows, safe when he goes thro' the Water, safe when he passes through the Fire, safe when the Waves do roar, safe when Hell gapes upon him, safe in a Storm, safe at Sea, safe on the Shore, safe in his Life, safe in his Death; God is concern'd for him, in all his Afflictions he is afflicted; the Lord Jesus is touch'd with his Infirmities, and the Spirit of God makes Intercessions for him, with Groans that cannot be utter'd. In a Word, there is no Condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, to them that walk not after the Flesh, but after the Spirit, Rom. 8. 1.

The



## The PRAYER.

**O** God! whose Pity is infinite! whose Compassion knows no Bounds! how shall I extol thy Humiliation! How shall I admire thy Condescension to this poor Worm! Will God, the Great, the Omnipotent God, look upon such an one as I? Wilt thou enter into a Covenant with this Lump of Clay? Wilt thou tie, and oblige thy self to do me Good? The Favour is wonderful! I could not have thought it possible, but that thou hast most graciously reveal'd it to me. I believe, Lord! help my Unbelief! Behold, I am thy Servant, the Son [the Daughter] of thy Hand-maid. Be it unto me according unto thy Word. I accept of thy Offer. I count my self happy, that I may be admitted into Covenant with thee. I renounce the Devil and all his Works. Thou shalt be my Master, my Father, my Guide, my Director, my King, and my God; my Master to command me, my Father to counsel me, my Guide to lead me, my Director to conduct me, my King to rule me, my God to dispose of me as thou pleasest. I will know no Will, but thy Will. By the Blood of the Covenant, unite my Will to thy Will. Grant me to desire what thou delightest in, desiring to search after it, searching to know it, and knowing it to fulfil it. Make me, O Lord, for thou alone can'st do it, make me obedient without Contradiction, holy without Defection, chaste without Corruption, patient without Murmuring, humble without Dissimulation, chearful without Licentiousness,

ness, sorrowful without Dejection, grave without Affectation, nimble in Religion without Lightness, fearful without Despair, upright without Hypocrisy, and fruitful in good Works without Presumption. Give me a watchful Heart, a Heart not easily drawn away by vain Imaginations, a Heart unbroken by Afflictions, unaffected with the Vanities of the World, that may not swell with Prosperity, nor sink in Adversity. Grant me Understanding to know thee, Diligence to seek thee, Wisdom to find thee, a Readiness to please thee, Perseverance to wait for thee, and Confidence at last to embrace thee. O holy and eternal Spirit! I depend upon thy Assistance. Make me faithful to my God, faithful to my Neighbour, faithful to mine own Soul, faithful in my Calling, faithful in the Discharge of my Duty, faithful in my Promises, faithful in my Conversation, faithful in my Love, faithful in my Obedience, faithful in thy House, faithful in mine own, faithful unto Death, that I may obtain a Crown of Life, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

Prayer.

I. Though the Example of the primitive Believers is not properly a Law, yet we may have leave to infer so much from it, that being well acquainted with the Will of Christ, and his Apostles, in those Practices which were universal, we ought not without very urgent Reasons, to depart from that Pattern: and if this Rule hold, frequent Communicating at the Lord's Table, will become if not absolutely necessary, yet highly useful and expedient, since it was the Practice of the best of Men, in the best of Ages; and of this, the

## C H A P. XIV.

Of frequent receiving the Holy Communion, and  
the Necessity of it.

## The CONTENTS.

Frequent coming to the Lord's Table, the Practice of the primitive Christians. Receiving every Lord's Day, an universal Observance. Different Customs in different Churches. Decay of a good Life, the Cause of Communicating seldom. The Necessity of frequent Communicating, shewn in four Particulars, as the Eucharist is a great Preservative against Sin, an Engagement to emulate Christ's Virtues, a Motive to Charity; and the frequent coming, a Thing very pleasing to God. Enquiry made, how often a conscientious Christian is bound to Communicate; the Measures of that Obligation to be taken partly from the Orders of the Church we live in, and partly from the Fervency of our Love to Christ. An Objection drawn from the Danger of Contempt and Disesteem of the Ordinance, if we come often, answer'd. Arguments to prove, that lawful Business in the World, is no just Impediment of Communicating frequently. An Expostulation, pressing frequent Receiving. The frequent Communicant, an Object of Divine Mercy. The Prayer.

I. **T**Hough the Example of the primitive Believers is not properly a Law, yet we may have Leave to infer so much from it, that being well acquainted with the Will of Christ and his Apostles, in those Practices especially which were universal, we ought not, without very urgent Reasons, to depart from that Pattern; and if this Rule hold, frequent Communicating at the Lord's Table, will become, if not absolutely necessary, yet highly useful and expedient, since it was the Practice of the best of Men, in the best of Ages; and of this, the



*Acts* of the holy Apostles give us a very large Account, particularly *Ch.* 2. 42, 46. which Place being generally understood of the *Eucharist*, it must follow that the Believers did daily participate of it. But this seems to have been a Custom peculiar to the Church of *Jerusalem*, for though *St. Cyprian*, *St. Chrysostom*, and *St. Austin* speak of some Places in their Time, where the daily Sacrifice was celebrated, yet even in the Apostles Days we find other Churches did not tie themselves to that Practice, particularly that of *Troas*, where the Communion was celebrated every Lord's Day only, as *St. Luke* informs us, *Acts* 20. 7. And upon the first Day of the Week, when the Disciples came together to break Bread, Paul preach'd unto them; and this Custom the Apostles seem to have establish'd in most Churches, because it was follow'd almost in all Places, not only while they liv'd, but after they had left the World; and continu'd for several Centuries, 'till Zeal and Fervour in the House of God decay'd; and because none of the Ancients hath so fully describ'd this Custom as *Justin Martyr*, who liv'd in the second Century, or 150 Years after Christ, it will not be amiss to set down his Words, which are. On the Day call'd Sunday, all who are either in the City or Country, come together in one Place, and the Commentaries, or Writings, either of the Apostles or Prophets, as Time will permit, are read to the Congregation. The Reader having done, the *Προεδρος* or President, or the chief Minister of the Church, makes an Oration, in which he instructs the Hearers, and exhorts them to a sincere Imitation of the excellent Things, that have been deliver'd to them. Upon this, we all rise and apply our selves to Prayer. This done, Bread, and Wine, and Water, are brought forth, and the President, as far as he is able, offers to Almighty God Prayers, and Praises, at which the People joyfully say, Amen. Whereupon Distribution is made of the consecrated Things to all that are present.

*Just. Mart. Apol.*  
2. pro Christianis.  
Τῇ τῇ ἡλίου λεγο-  
μένη ἡμέρᾳ πάν-  
των χριστιανῶν ὡς  
ἀγρευτὴς μυσθίων ἐπι-  
τὸ αὐτὸ συνέλθαι  
γίνεται, &c.

If

If any be absent, the Deacons carry them to their Houses. Those who are of the richer Sort, contribute Alms every one according to his Ability; and what is thus gather'd, is deposited in the President's Hand; and out of that, he relieves Orphans, and Widows, and such as by Reason of Sickness, or some other Distresses, have Need of it; such also as are in Bonds, and poor Strangers that come to him: In a Word, he is a Steward to all that are in Want: And on Sunday particularly we meet thus, because it is the first Day in which God, out of Darkness and Matter, which he had created before, fram'd this visible World; and Jesus Christ our Redeemer rose that Day from the Dead, for the Day before Saturday he was crucify'd, and after that, which is Sunday, he appear'd to his Disciples, and bid them do what we have here related. To this Purpose speaks Tertullian, who liv'd about 50 Years after him; and of this Lord's Day, it's probable Pliny the Heathen Governor spoke, when giving Trajan the Emperor an Account of the Life and Manners of the Christians, he tells him, that they us'd to meet *Stado die*, on a set Day. In a Word, for Believers to receive the Lord's Supper every Lord's Day, was accounted in those Ages as necessary as publick Prayer, and hearing the Word of God explain'd. In Epiphanius's Time it was customary, in some Places, to receive the Holy Communion thrice a Week, and they look'd upon that Practice as deriv'd from an Apostolical Tradition, viz. *Wednesdays, Fridays, and Sundays*. In some Churches, as *Socrates* informs us, they had a Sacrament constantly on the *Sabbath-Day*, or *Saturday*, but that was much dislik'd by the Churches of *Rome* and *Alexandria*. *St. Basil* makes mention of a Custom in his Time, which was, to communicate four Times a Week, *Wednesdays, Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays*. Afterwards, some receiv'd the Holy Communion once in three Weeks. At last, as all Things, in Progress of Time, deviated from the first Institution, the Christians came to the receiving of it thrice in a Year, which they thought was the least a Man, who profess'd himself a Christian could do; which occasion'd that Canon  
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in the Council of Turin, that a Lay-man, who did not communicate thrice a Year, should be excommunicated, or, which is the same, not be counted a Christian. From which historical Reflections, it's evident, that in the purer Ages of the Church, frequent Communion was counted a very necessary Duty.

II. What was necessary then, cannot, must not, be counted needless now; and the Reasons that enforce the Necessity of it at this Day, are these following.

1. It must be granted, that this frequent Communicating is a very great Preservative against Sin. The Heathens talk'd much of their Amulets and Preservatives against the Arts of Sorcerers and Magicians; but this, without any Superstition, may more truly be call'd a Preservative against the Witchcraft of Sin, and offending God. Nothing is more rational, for in this Sacrament the Demerit of Sin is represented in very sad Characters. In the wounded and mangled Body of our Great Master, in the Anguish his Soul was in, upon the Account of our Sins, we behold what odious and monstrous Things they are; how abominable to God's purer Eyes; how contrary to his Holiness, and what a Separation they make betwixt the Creator and the Creature; how they move him to forsake us, to withdraw his gracious Presence from us; what Fears, what Tremblings, what Shame, what Ignominy, what Sorrow, and what Grief they cause. All this certainly is to be seen in the Floods of Misery which fell upon our Mediator, who undertook our Cause, bore our Sins upon the Cross, and was made Sin for us, put his Shoulder under our Griefs, and carry'd our Sorrows, was wounded for our Transgressions, and bruised for our Iniquities: And having taken that tremendous Burthen upon himself, see how he was rejected, despised, forsaken, trampled on; what Horror, what Fears, what Darknes fell upon him, which is an Item not only of what our Sins have deserved, but of what we shall feel everlastingly, if we embrace



brace not this Mediator as our sovereign Lord, or are not resolv'd to tread in his Steps; for when he cry'd, *My God, why hast thou forsaken me?* it was not for his own sake, that he fell into this Exclamation, but for ours, to shew that the Sinner, who, after this, would not repent, should be forsaken of God for ever; and can I see in this great Example, how God will deal with me, if I neglect the Calls of Grace and Mercy? And can I be so brutish, and hug those Sins which, upon my Account, were so severely lash'd in him, that was my Surety, who stept in and took the Blow, that would have lighted upon me? All the Goodness, Holiness, and Divinity, that was in this Saviour of Mankind, could not make the Sins he bore, look lovely in the Eyes of God; and though he was the Son of God, yet our Sins being laid upon him, as they were on the Sacrifice under the Law, God's Justice and Purity would not dispence with looking upon them with a favourable Eye; and though he was the dearly lov'd of his eternal Father, yet God punish'd those Sins in him in a very terrible Manner, to let us know, that if we accept not of the Remedy *Christ* offers us, do not make his Cross a Motive to Conversion, they shall be thus punish'd in our Persons, and that to all Eternity. All this is represented to us in this Sacrament, a Saviour groaning, and weeping, and sighing under the Burthen of our Sins, and thereby giving Notice, that if we grow not weary of Sin, we shall weep, and groan, and sigh for ever; and shall not the dreadful Spectacle fill my Soul with Abhorrence and Detestation of what I see so signally punish'd? Shall not I run away from it, and say to it, *Get thee hence, thou evil and unclean Spirit; touch me not; what Agreement hath the Temple of God with Idols?* And if this holy Sacrament be so great a Preservative against Sin, surely we cannot too often make Use of it, especially since we see how easily Sin doth beset us, how often we are tempted to it, and how we are daily encompass'd with Suggestions and Provocations to it.

2. This frequent *Communicating*, cannot but be a mighty Engagement to a pious Emulation of the virtuous and gracious Life of the ever-blessed *Jesus*. There is none but knows how frequent going into Company, that is of such a Temper, and seeing their Manners and ways of acting, is apt to produce Assumulation of Disposition in the Persons that frequent it: That Society a Man frequently resorts to, gives a Tincture to his Nature and Inclination; and consequently, the frequent seeing and conversing with the holy and gracious *Jesus* in this Sacrament, is very likely to have the same Effect. For in this Ordinance, we do not only come to see him bleeding and dying for his Enemies, but to look upon his eminent Virtues too, his wonderful Meekness, his deep Humility, his unparallel'd Patience, his cheerful Submission to the Will of God, his admirable Self-Resignation, his unshaken Contentedness, his generous Contempt of the World, and his steady living in the Thoughts of future Bliss and Glory. Can I see these Virtues shine in his noble Soul, and remember that they are set before me to raise my Desires of being like him, and believe that God expects and requires of me to transcribe them on my Temper? Can I see how lovely, how amiable, and how beautiful these Graces are; how, in the midst of all his Troubles, they proclaim him to be the Son of God, and in despite of all the Contempt and Scorn of Men and Devils, speak him to be a Favourite of Heaven? Can I see how, in the midst of all the Affronts, and Derisions, and Indignities he endur'd, these Graces still made him amiable, glorious in a Storm, bright in that dismal Night-Dress, illustrious in Misery, magnificent in Poverty? Can I see how these Diamonds glisten in the black Jet in which they are plac'd; and, notwithstanding the dull Matter that doth encompass them, are Diamonds still of an infinite Value, priz'd by God, esteem'd by Angels, magnify'd by all good Men, agreeable to Reason, conformable to God's Nature?

Can I see all this, and continue stubborn and obstinate, and an Enemy to these Virtues? Is not this enough to make me enamour'd with them, to oblige me to long for them, and to cause a Disquiet in my Soul, 'till it be possess'd of these inestimable Treasures? And if this Sacrament be such an Engagement to this pious Emulation, and endeavour after the same gracious Qualifications; is it not fit, is it not expedient, is it not reasonable, is it not necessary, that I should communicate frequently, and eat often, and drink often at this Table, except I am afraid of being too lively, too good, or too serious?

3. This Sacrament is a *mighty Promoter of fervent Charity*. And since the frequent Exercise of this Charity is necessary, frequent communicating must be so too, this being the Cause, or Incentive, to the other. That in an eminent Manner it promotes and encourages Charity and Love to our fellow Christians, Concord and Unity, Peace and Amity, Readiness of Mind to do good, and Bowels of Kindness to our Brethren; none can doubt, that's sensible, what Charity is represented in this Ordinance. Here I see how the great Commander of Heaven and Earth offers Reconciliation to a desperate Offender; and whereas the Offender should be the first, and should seek and implore God's Pardon, God prevents him, and with his royal Hands, unask'd, bestows upon him a Patent of Grace and Mercy. Here I see how the supreme Judge, who hath absolute Power over our Life and Death, is willing to be Friends with a Wretch that owes him ten thousand Talents, and willing frankly to forgive him all, to discharge him of all his Debts, and to supersede all Actions against him. Here I see how the everlasting Father is ready to receive the Prodigal into his House again, to admit him to his Table, who had spent all his Substance in riotous living, ready to kill the fatted Calf for him, to put a Ring on his Finger, and to betroth him to himself in Righteousness.

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Here I see how he, before whom all Nations are as Grasshoppers, offers to embrace the Worm that hath resisted him, spoken ill of him, prostituted his Glory, expos'd Religion, and study'd and contriv'd Ways to dishonour him. Here I see the Son of God ready, with the Balsam of his Blood, to anoint the Wretch that made the Wounds, and dying for the Men, the Multitude of whose Offences hath seem'd to vie with the Number of God's Mercies. Here I see how infinite Light offers to twist its Rays with loathsome Darkness; and how the greatest Prince proceeds to those Excesses of Humility, as to give the greatest Sinners Room and Entertainment in his banqueting House, to call them Brethren, and Friends, and Sheep of his Flock; than which, there are scarce more endearing Titles. All this I behold here; and shall not such a wonderful Scene of Charity blow those little Sparks of Affection I find within, into greater Flames? Can I see here what God hath done for me, who have acted more treacherously against him, than my greatest Enemy ever did against me; and shall not this raise Compassion in me to my Fellow-Servants, and move me to lay down all Wrath and Enmity to them, whose Injuries are but Flea-bites in Comparison of those I have offer'd to the *best of Beings*? And if this Sacrament be so strong an Engagement to this Charity, it stands to Reason, that frequent Communicating must be necessary too; the rather, because we are so often in danger of breaking the Bond of Peace, and dissolving the Cement, which must hold and knit Christians together. So that,

4. This *frequent communicating* cannot but be acceptable to God; and this he declar'd in the Example of the primitive Believers, whose frequent receiving did so incline the Favour of God toward them, that the *Evangelist* takes notice, *Acts ii. 47. The Lord added to the Church daily such as should be sav'd.* In this the Divine Bounty express'd its Liking of their frequent

repairing to the Table of the Lord. This was not only a Reward of their frequent Communion, but God made that Frequency a Motive to others to embrace the true Religion. Nothing works upon Strangers more to join themselves to the mystical Body of Christ, than to see the Professors live up to their Principles, and maintain the Rules their Master hath given them. This enforces even such as are Aliens to the Commonwealth of *Israel*, to encourage one another in the Language of those Votaries we read of *Psalms cxxii. 1, 2, 3.* *Let us go into the House of the Lord; our Feet shall stand within thy Gates, O Jerusalem! Jerusalem is builded as a City that is compact together, whither the Tribes go up, the Tribes of the Lord, unto the Testimony of Israel, to give Thanks unto the Name of the Lord, for there are set Thrones of Judgment, the Thrones of the House of David. Pray for the Peace of Jerusalem, they shall prosper that love thee; Peace be within thy Walls, and Prosperity within thy Palaces; for my Brethren and Companions Sake, I will now say, Peace be within thee; because of the House of the Lord our God, I will seek thy Good.* So that what the Apostle, *1 Cor. xiv. 22.* says of the Gift of Tongues, the same may be said of frequent Communicating, that it is *a Sign to them that believe not.* Hereby they are perswaded to believe, seeing the Professors act like Persons that believe what their Master hath said. This frequent communicating shews their Zeal and Unity; and there is no Man vers'd in *Ecclesiastical History*, but knows how much these two prevail'd with Infidels to come into the Sheepfold of *Christ Jesus*. It being evident therefore, that this frequent communicating is very acceptable to God, how can we say we love him, if we are loath to do what we know will please him? The Father hath not left me alone, saith our Saviour, because *I do always the Things that please him, John viii. 29.* And the same may be apply'd to the frequent Communicant; the Father will not leave him alone, he will be sure to guard him; tho' a thousand

fall on his Side, and ten thousand on his right Hand, yet he'll take care that no Evil shall happen unto him, for he doth those Things that please him.

III. How often a conscientious Christian is bound to communicate, the Scripture hath not thought fit to determine; that it ought to be done *often*, the Apostle doth sufficiently intimate, 1 Cor. xi. 26. but there is no Law extant in the whole Gospel, that saith, *So many times a Year, or Month, or Week, you shall appear at the Lord's Table*: And from hence arose that Variety of Customs in several Churches we mention'd before: And what *Socrates* observes in this Point, is very probable, that that Variety of Practice deriv'd its Original from the various Judgments and Constitutions of Bishops, in their several Diocesess, which with their Posterity pass'd into a Law: Yet tho' they vary'd in Times, and Days, and Hours, it's easy to gather from those various Customs, that all made Conscience of coming frequently to the holy Communion, till Ignorance and Vice invaded the Priesthood, as well as the Laity; and when the Priests became regardless of this Ordinance, no Marvel if the Laity did either despise or neglect it. And most certainly, to communicate once, or twice, or thrice a Year, cannot be call'd frequent eating of this Bread, and drinking of this Cup; for this is to do it but seldom, and is an Argument that we are not very solicitous to gain or preserve our Master's Favour and good Will, which is ever kept warm by frequent Addresses and Importunity. It was therefore an unworthy Act of Pope *Innocent III*, in the *Lateran Council*, in the Year 1215, to make a Canon for Lay-men, that *it was sufficient for them to communicate but once a Year*; for hereby they fell into great Ignorance, Debauchery, and Sensuality; and that which should have restrain'd them from Sin, being so seldom administer'd to them, they sunk daily into greater Barbarity. This *Petrus Cluniacensis* was so sensible of, that, having understood



of the *Persebutians*, that they had a Communion but once a Year, he thus expostulates with them; *You say, once only; but Christ and his Apostles say, not once, or twice, or thrice, or an hundred Times, or a thousand Times only, but as often as ye do it.* There is a great Difference between *as often*, and *once or twice.* Here is the beginning of Numbers, but the other Expression exceeds all Numbers; here is more Singularity, but in the other is infinite Multiplicity. The *Arabians* have a Proverb, *Visit seldom, and you increase Love:* But, however this Maxim may hold among Men, I am sure it is not so with God, who, in the Commendation of his Servants, lays the Stress upon their Assiduity in his Service; and therefore when the holy Ghost speaks in the Praise of *Anna the Prophetess*, he gives her this Character, that tho' *she was a Widow of about fourscore and four Years, yet she departed not from the Temple, but serv'd God with Fastings and Prayers Night and Day.* I know this is not spoken with respect to this Sacrament; but all that I prove from it, is this, that the Assiduity and Frequency of divine Worship, is that which God is pleas'd to make a Sign, not only of his Love, but our Sincerity too. His Kindness to our Souls, advances with our Importunities, and frequent Adorations cause frequent Influences of his Love; and since the holy Ghost hath not thought fit to resolve how many Times in the Year we are to communicate, on purpose to leave Room for our free-will Offerings, the Examples of the Saints of old, are a very safe Rule to walk by. In our civil Affairs, where a Statute is wanting, Customs and Presidents are a Law, and we think it reasonable it should be so; and when *St. Paul* calls to us in the Stile of a Command, *Brethren, be ye Followers of me, and mark them that walk so, having us for an Ensamble,* Phil. iii. 17. The Examples of the Saints of Old, will be found to be of greater Force in our Practice, than is generally believ'd; and tho' the ancient Churches have had different Customs in this Particular, yet that which most have agreed

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on, may justly oblige us to Imitation. However, nothing is more certain, than that we are plac'd under Governors, whose lawful Commands we are to obey; and as the Governors of the respective Churches have Power to order the circumstantial and decent Part of divine Worship, so he acts most safely, that conforms to the Constitutions of the Church he is of; and since in the Church we are Members of, both to prevent Contempt of this Sacrament by too frequent coming, and People's hardening their Hearts in Sin, by a too long Neglect of it, it is thought fit to receive the holy Communion once a Month; we have not only great Reasons to conform to that Order, but to thank God we are encourag'd to this frequent Devotion. In some particular Churches among us, a Communion every Lord's Day is kept up, according to the primitive Rule; however, a Month is a just Distance to take Notice what Progress we make in Goodness, and what Effects the last Communion hath upon our Spirits; and tho' I can alledge no exprefs Command for it, out of the Word of God, yet there is a Command which imports as much, even this, *Obeys them that have the Rule over you in the Lord, and submit your selves, for they watch for your Souls; as they that must give an Account, that they may do it with Joy, and not with Grief, Heb. xiii. 17.* But these Arguments are needless to a Soul that hath a lively Sense of the Love of God. Love will run without a Driver; and there needs no pulling or haling him to the Communion, who hath seen and tasted how sweet and how gracious the Lord is. That inward Sense will make him come frequently, whether his Superiors command him or no. He that doth nothing in Religion, but what his Governors force him to, doth not yet understand what that means, *The Love of God is shed abroad in our Hearts.* He that hath this Sense, finds a Law within, stronger than the Law of all Superiors, and which hath greater Power with him, than all external Motives. He that loves Christ fervently,

will love to be with him frequently; and since the Communion-Table is the Place where Christ hath promis'd to meet him, he'll be as often there as he can, except Sickneſs, or ſome ſuch inevitable Impediments hinder him; the rather, becauſe here Men bear the joyful Sound of Pardon, and walk in the Light of God's Countenance, *Pſal. lxxxix. 15.*

IV. But becauſe I foreſee it will be objected here, That frequent Communicating will abate our Eſteem and Veneration of this Sacrament, as all Things, when grown common and familiar, are apt to breed Contempt and Careleſneſs; it's fit I ſhould answer, and remove that pretended Stumbling-block. And therefore,

I. It cannot be frequent communicating, conſider'd in it ſelf, that abates our Zeal and Fervour to this Ordinance; for, let the Communion be never ſo frequent, the Arguments and Motives are ſtill the ſame; their Grandeur, Strength, Force, and Power is ſtill the ſame; ſtill theſe are able to kindle holy Fire on the Altars of our Souls, to raiſe Admiration of God's Mercies, and to enliven our Spirits into Conſcienciouſneſs and Severity of Life; and if this be the natural Tendency of theſe Motives at one Time, it is ſo at another; and conſequently the Abatement of our Eſteem and Veneration, is not the neceſſary Effect of frequent communicating; and in this the primitive Believers are a ſignal Inſtance, who, tho' they communicated ſome every Day, ſome every Lord's-Day, yet did not that Frequency leſſen their Veneration of theſe Myſteries; it rather increas'd and cheriſh'd it; and we have Reason to aſcribe their Contempt of ſublunary Contents, their Courage in Adverſity, their Valour in Perſecution, their ardent Deſires after another Life, their invincible Patience under Reproaches, their Conſtancy in the ſevereſt Tryals, their wonderful Joy in Troubles, their prodigious Self-denials to this frequent Communicating.



communicating. This, as it was a Means to set their Master always before their Eyes, so it left an Awe upon their Spirits, not to dishonour him by their Lives. This was a perpetual Curb to their Lusts, and having his Image constantly before them, made them walk as Children of their Father which is in Heaven; so that if frequent communicating be not the necessary Cause of an Abatement in our Veneration of this Sacrament, it must be some other accidental Thing, which may be remedy'd, that must occasion it. And therefore,

2. Some Decay in the Receiver, some Indisposition in the inward Man, must be charg'd with this Disesteem of the Ordinance; and it is not the frequent communicating, that is the Cause, but want of Care and Watchfulness in the Communicant. Indeed, where People approach this holy Table frequently, and bring no Hearts with them, no Desires after a better Life, do not think it worth while to spend serious Thoughts on the Death they are going to remember, come to it without any Design of being like Christ, premise only a few Prayers out of Custom, touch the Ark with unshaken Hands, dive not into their Hearts, nor do prepare themselves for this Banquet, thrust themselves in, as the Guest in the Gospel, without suitable Ornaments, do not plough up the fallow Ground, or do not make it soft and mellow with Meditation and Praises, and consider not what they come for, or to what End and Purpose they give their Attendance at the Altar; there we need not wonder, if frequent communicating abates their Esteem and Veneration of this Sacrament: But this is their Sin, and frequent Communion is not to be blam'd; it's their Love to the World, that will not suffer them to bring that Attention, Watchfulness, and Devotion with them, as is requisite to the comfortable Use of this Ordinance; a Sin which must be deplor'd, and, like the cursed Thing in the Camp of Israel, remov'd, before they come to see the Goings of God in the Sanctuary. The

covetous

covetous Man abates not in his Esteem of his Wealth and Treasure, tho' he look upon it every Day; and the Reason is, because his Affections are set upon it; and were our Affections set upon him, from whose Fulness we all receiv'd Grace for Grace, our frequent communicating would be so far from lessening our Esteem of this Sacrament, that it would render it more lovely; and more amiable to our Souls. Two Men of the same Trade live together, the one grows rich; the other continues poor; the one thrives, the other decays, because the one is industrious, the other lazy; one minds his Business, the other lies in Ale-houses and Taverns. This is the Case here; if some fall into a Disesteem of the Greatness of this Ordinance, by frequent communicating, it is because they take no Pains with their Souls before they communicate; whereas others, who are laborious and careful, tho' they receive never so often, they go on from Strength to Strength, 'till every one of them appears before God in *Sion*.

V. But since frequent Communication requires frequent Preparation, and frequent Preparation is a Thing that Persons who have much Business in the World, cannot attend, how can it be suppos'd necessary for such to communicate frequently? Tho' Preparation be a Subject that I intend to spend a distinct Chapter upon, yet something may be said of it here by the by, and by way of Anticipation, to shew the Weakness of this Excuse, and the Vanity of this Exception. And therefore,

1. Business is either lawful or unlawful; if it be unlawful, no conscientious Man must either involve himself in it, or continue to mind it; for whoever applies his Thoughts, Desires, or Affections, to any Business of that Nature, puts himself into a State of Damnation, and hangs over Hell-Fire by a very weak and feeble Thread, even this transitory Life, which, if it chance to break, his Soul is lost. In a Word, unlawful Business

ness makes a Man unfit, not only for frequent communicating, but for Salvation too; and then his Business is unlawful, if either out of Greediness he takes too much of worldly Business upon him, more than he can well go thro' with, and which must necessarily hinder him from minding his everlasting Concerns, or if his Business in the World necessitates, or necessarily engages him in Sin, as when a Man's Business engages him to Lying, or Cheating, or Stealing, or Extortion, or grinding the Faces of the Poor, or unreasonable Usury, or encouraging Men in their Sins, whether Drunkenness, or Uncleaness, or to Flattering or Dissembling, &c. where any such Sins are so bound up with the worldly Business, that the one cannot be perform'd without the other, there the Business is unlawful, sinful, odious to God, and must be quitted, banish'd, abandon'd, tho' he beggars himself by it, tho' he were to starve upon quitting of it; for this is inconsistent with any Hopes of Salvation, and a Man had better die ten thousand Times, than lose the Comforts of eternal Life; and to be sure, it must be quitted too, that a Man may be capable of coming to the holy Communion; for without it, he is no more fit to be seen at this Table, than a Swine in a Royal Chamber. If the Business be lawful, it can be no Impediment to seeking first God's Kingdom and his Righteousness; for lawful Business is commanded, and one Command doth not clash with the other; and if it be no Impediment to a serious Course of Life, except a Man will needs make it so, it can be no just Impediment to Prayer and Meditation, and Acts of Love, and contemplating the Mystery of the Cross, and consequently no Impediment to frequent communicating.

2. Preparation to the holy Sacrament, is either *habitual* or *actual*; *habitual Preparation* Divines call that when a Man's constant Care is to please God, and to approve himself faithful to God, and to be conscientious in all his Ways, when he makes it his Business,  
and



and the bent of his Soul is, to arrive to higher Degrees of Sanctification, and he is fully and invincibly resolv'd not to harbour any thing that he shall know or suspect to be offensive to God. This *habitual Preparation* is as necessary as Conversion it self; and I doubt not, but a Man thus prepar'd, may at any Time, upon a very short Warning, receive the holy Sacrament to his spiritual Comfort, as is manifest from the Example of the primitive Christians, who, at first, before they were very numerous, receiv'd the *Eucharist* every Day, and therefore could not well come with any other Preparation, but what was habitual. *Actual Preparation* consists, as we shall shew hereafter, in retirement, suitable Prayers and Thanksgivings, in Self-examination, and Contemplation of the Death of Christ, and the Motives, Reasons, and Benefits of it, Resolutions, &c. This actual Preparation is either more *prolix*, or more *compendious*. The *prolix*, or longer actual Preparation, is necessary, till Men become Masters of that gracious Habit I have already spoken of; but if this be once become the constant Guest of the Soul, if this once become an Inhabitant, a shorter actual Preparation is sufficient; and therefore where a Man is habitually prepar'd by a conscientious Course, he may follow his lawful Concerns and Business in the World, and yet that need not hinder him from those shorter actual Preparations requisite in frequent communicating. In a Word, let a Man but once, in good earnest, proclaim War to all his known Corruptions and Imaginations, that exalt themselves against the Constitutions and Injunctions of *Christ Jesus*, and he need not doubt, but that a very short actual Preparation, tho' it were only some few fervent Ejaculations, will make him a worthy Partaker of the Comforts of divine Love, tender'd to him in this Sacrament; and consequently, lawful Business can be no just Impediment to such frequent Preparation. But of this I shall have Occasion to say more hereafter.

*The preceding Considerations reduced to Practice.*

**I**T's no Wonder to see that *Strictness* *Christ* hath com-  
manded his Followers to observe in their Lives,  
decay and dwindle away to nothing but Shew and  
Formality, in the Age we live in, since frequent com-  
municating is so much out of Date among us. Blessed  
be God, all are not of this Mind, and many pious  
Souls we have, which conscienciously appear at the  
Lord's Table, as often as they are call'd to it; but still  
what a vast Number of miserable Souls there are  
abroad, who are such perfect Strangers to this frequent  
communicating, that some even die, and leave this  
World without ever thinking of it; and others delay  
their coming to it, till Death fills them with Horror  
upon the Account of their Neglect; and others come  
as seldom as they can. What shall I say to such Per-  
sons? What Arguments shall I use with them? How  
shall I aggravate their Offence? Are you Christians,  
or are you Heathens? That a Turk, a Pagan, a Jew,  
doth not shew himself at this holy Table, is no Won-  
der, for he is unacquainted with the Religion of a  
crucify'd Saviour; but that you who profess your selves  
his Disciples, should be loth to come and see what  
hath been done for you upon the Cross, what Won-  
ders, what Miracles of Love God hath wrought for  
you on the Tree, to which the Son of God was  
nail'd, what can we think, what can we imagine,  
but that you are Infidels, under the Name and Shew of  
Believers? How justly may I expostulate with you,  
what are you afraid of, that you either come not at all  
to this *Well of Salvation*, or come but seldom? What frights  
you? What stops your Journey? Are you afraid of  
parting with that which is Death it self to your Re-  
deemer, your Sins and Naughtiness? Are you afraid of  
purifying your selves, even as he is pure? Are you afraid

of

of living up to his Example? Are you afraid of losing your foolish Delights and Satisfactions? Do you pretend to be Friends of *Christ*, and are you loath to accept of him for your Friend? Doth he promise to come and meet you in this Ordinance, and are you loath or ashamed to be seen in his Company? Had you rather keep your Trash, and Dung, and Filth, than come hither and be made clean? Tell me not that you are willing to receive him, if you will not receive him in his own Way: In this Sacrament he offers himself to you, if here you will not embrace him, if here you will not express your esteem of him, what Hopes have you that he will ever be your Portion? What can the ever blessed *Jesus* think of you? What can he judge of you? What Opinion can he entertain of you, but that you are his Enemies, Enemies to his Supper, Enemies to his Love, Enemies to your own Souls? Must you be dragg'd to your own Happiness? Must you be forc'd to drink of this Water of Life? While you keep off, and stand out, are not you the Persons that would not have this Man, this *more than Man*, to reign over you? There can no just Reason be given for your not coming frequently to this holy Table, but that you are loath to agree to the Terms of sincere Repentance and Obedience, he requires at your Hands; and are you loath to be sav'd? Do you take Pleasure in being Reprobates? Is it such a comfortable Thing to be excluded from God's Favour? While you wilfully absent your selves, do not you refuse to be heal'd? Here the kind Physician comes, and declares his Willingness to cure you by the Balsam of his Wounds, and had you rather be sick, than of a healthful Complexion? Here is a Medicine tender'd unto you, a Medicine for your Sin-sick Souls; and had you rather perish, than rise and awake, that *Christ* may give you Life? Hath the Son of God endur'd so much, gone through such a Discipline of Torments, through Fire and Water, that your Souls might live, and do you despise his Love? Do not you despise it, when you come  
so



so seldom to apply it? Would not one think that you have a mind to be miserable, when you are so backward to come to him, that would deliver you from your Misery? Ah! did you believe the astonishing Mystery of God's Love, how would you breath, how would you pant; how would you hunger and thirst for this Fountain, open'd for the House of Judah and Jerusalem! It's a Sign your Appetite is dull, your Desires feeble, your Affections cold, your Inclinations frozen; were all Things right within, the Fire would burn, and at last you would speak with your Tongue, *I come, Lord! I come! I delight to do thy Will!* It is the Will, the Order, the Command of that God, in whom you believe, to come often, and shall any Thing hinder you from obeying his Command? Shall not his Orders prevail with you? Can you prefer your little Business before his Will? Do you believe that he must be your Judge, and will you allow always your selves in Rebellion and Contumacy under his Injunction? *If any Man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be,* saith Christ, *John xii. 26.* Ah! shall so sweet a Voice be lost upon you? Shall not this Invitation of the bleeding Jesus, melt you? He was just going to his Cross, when he said so! He was just going to institute this Sacrament of the Cross, when he call'd so! Ah! how sweet are these Words! How full of Kindness! How fragrant is this Breath! What can work more upon harden'd Hearts! Break, break, thou stubborn Heart! The Rocks sympathize with him, and cleave asunder, and cannot this Voice, this Voice of Mercy, make an Alteration in thy Breast! O take heed, lest this Lamb, which came to take away the Sins of the World, put on another Shape e'er long, even that of a Lyon, and roar upon you, as it is *Luke xiv. 24.* *I say unto you, that none of these Men that were bidden, shall taste of this Supper.* I know there are some honest Souls, who, out of a Sense of their own Unworthiness, dare not come, and dread frequent approach-

ing to this Table; but such I would not fright, but win to this frequent Communion; and all I shall say to them at this Time, is this, Are you willing Christ should set up his Throne in your Souls? Are you willing he should tread down his Enemies in you, Enemies which have usurp'd his Power? Are you content he should be form'd in you, and fill all your Faculties? Are you content all should stoop to him, and all that is within you, should bow to his Scepter? If so, fear not, you cannot come too often, your frequent running to his Altar will be Incense to him, Incense which he'll smell, as he did Noah's Sacrifice, and secure you against future Destruction.

II. The frequent Communicant ought to receive some Comfort from these Instructions. But then, by the frequent Communicant, I do not mean one that doth indeed come often to this Table, but knows not what it is to be heated by the Fire of Divine Love, whose Sins are strong, and his holy Desires weak, and whose frequent coming hath made him as careless, as the vast Number of Sermons he hath heard: For such a frequent Communicant God hath given us no Comforts, to such a one we have no Message, no Embassy of Peace; but the frequent Receiver, whose Choice of the better Part is both confirm'd and increas'd by frequent Receiving, this is the Man to whom we are bound to carry *Balm* and *Spices* for a *Present*. To you it is that this Word of Consolation comes. Your frequent attending at this Table, is living under the precious Drops of the Dew of Heaven. How goodly are thy Tents, O *Jacob*! How justly may you say, that God loves you, when you love to be often with him, whom your Souls do love! Surely your Souls will grow fat and flourishing, that are so often nourish'd at this Table! It's a Sign you long for the Courts of the Lord, and you shall certainly appear in a nobler Court one Day, a Court where nothing is mean, nothing trivial,  
nothing

nothing savouring of terrestrial Delights ; but a Court where all the Servants are Kings, and all enjoy more than the greatest Monarchs of this World do : *Blessed are your Eyes, for they see, and your Ears, for they hear.* The oftener you see the precious Sacrifice on this Table, the more endearing it will become to you ; the oftener you hear him call here, *Come to me all that are weary,* the more desirable will he grow in your Eyes ; the oftener you meet here, the greater will be the Friendship betwixt him and you, till this Friend comes at last, and receives you to himself, so that you shall be for ever with the Lord.

*The P R A T E R.*

**O** Dearest Saviour, dearer to me than Father and Mother ! my Friend in all Dangers, my Benefactor in all Wants, my Fortrefs in all Troubles ! I cannot but confess that thou hast frequently call'd to me, frequently entreated me, frequently expostulated with me, and frequently ask'd me, why I would die ? and I have as frequently stopt my Ears against thy Call, and been deaf to thy Voice, and my Follies have kept Pace with thy Favours ! I see my Mistakes, I see my Errors, and my Sins I desire may be ever before me ; I know thy Voice, it is the good Shepherd's Voice, that calls me to this Table, and thy Sheep hear thy Voice. I earnestly desire to be one of that Number. O feed me with thy Pleasures ! O open mine Eyes, that I may see the rich Pastures that are to be found in thy Grave ! To this Sepulchre let me repair often ! O perswade me to look often into it, that I may, with the holy Woman, see the Angels sitting there. To increase my Willingness



lingness to come frequently, visit me frequently with thy Salvation. Let not my Familiarity of that Sight, lessen my Esteem of the sacred Mystery. The oftener I participate of it, the greater let my Love, my Affections, and my Admiration be! Open still new Springs of Love, when I come to this Sacrament of thy everlasting Love, that the new Springs may still give new Life to my Soul, new Courage to do thy Will, new Power to tread on Serpents, new Resolutions to conquer all that stops my Way. And thus, my dearest Lord, transform me by the renewing of my Mind, that I may prove what is the holy, acceptable, and perfect Will of God. *Amen, Amen.*



C H A P. XVI.

Of the Perpetuity of this Ordinance, and the Necessity of its Continuance to the World's End.

The C O N T E N T S.

St. Paul's Command to the Corinthians, of shewing forth the Lord's Death 'till he come, not to be understood of Christ's coming to them in the Spirit, but coming to Judgment. This prov'd largely by many Arguments. The Reasons laid down, why this Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, is to last to the end of the World. Christ's coming to Judgment, prov'd to be a very proper Object of our Contemplation in the receiving of the holy Eucharist, and a help to Patience, and Faith, and Confidence in the Goodness of God. God's marvellous Care of our everlasting Welfare, shewn in tying us up in Bonds of Obedience in this Ordinance. Men who look for Grace and Salvation, as they are bound to make Use of the Means of Grace, so they are oblig'd to make Use of this. The wretched State of those who neglect to shew forth the Lord's Death in this Sacrament. The same Temper requir'd in receiving the Eucharist, that we desire to be in when we shall be summon'd to Judgment. The Prayer.

I. **T**HAT this Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, is a standing Ordinance, and to last to the End of the World, St. Paul expressly tells us, 1 Cor. xi. 26. For as often as you eat this Bread, and drink this Cup, ye do shew, or do ye shew the Lord's Death 'till he come. Whereby is plainly meant Christ's coming to judge the World; and this hath been the unanimous Belief of the universal Church, since the Apostles Time, unto this Day; which

makes us justly wonder at the Boldness and Ignorance of *Quakers*, and other Enthusiasts, who have presum'd to abolish this Ordinance in their Conventicles, pretending, that this Sacrament was fitted only for the Infancy of the Christian Church, but intended it should cease when Christ should come to them in the Spirit; and having already receiv'd Christ, as they fancy, in their first Conversion and Regeneration, they foolishly and ridiculously imagine that they have no need of receiving him again, in the Use of the outward Symbols, tender'd to Christians in this Sacrament. Puff'd up with this airy Conceit, they run into this sinister and childish Interpretation of the Apostle's Words, contrary to the Sense of all Christian Churches, as if, *Till he come*, were as much as *Till he come to you in the Spirit*; to which impertinent Exposition, nothing could possibly lead these silly Men, but the Spirit of Error, and Contempt of all human Learning, and undervaluing the common Dictates of Reason, and a monstrous spiritual Pride, which not only swells them with an Opinion, that they are wiser than all the Christians in the World besides, but tempts them to other Insolencies and Prophanations of the written Oracles of the Holy Ghost; and therefore, lest weak Capacities should be ensnar'd by such specious Pretences, it will be necessary to shew the Unreasonableness of this Interpretation.

1. There is not the least Syllable, not the least Hint given us in all the *New Testament*, that this Sacrament, after it was once instituted, was ever to be abolish'd; which made not only the Apostles introduce it into the Christian Congregations, while they liv'd, but all the Churches, plant'd and founded by them, retain'd and continu'd it, knowing nothing to the contrary, but that this Ordinance was to be perpetual and eternal; and therefore, as they had receiv'd the necessary Use of it from those who laid the Foundation of their Religion, so they propagated the same to their Posterity: Nay, among the *Hereticks*, that left and separated from the

Church,



Church, there were very few, but what preserv'd the Use of this Sacrament in their Congregations; and tho' they had the Insolence of blaspheming other Mysteries of Christianity, yet this Ordinance they were afraid to abolish, being sensible that it was one of the Corner-stones of Christianity: And who could imagine otherwise, that consider'd how this Sacrament succeeded in the Room of the Passover, which was *Item* enough that it was to last for ever? for as the Passover, after its first Institution, was to last to the end of the Jewish Œconomy, that expiring with Christ's Death, so this succeeding, was an Argument, that it was to continue while the Dispensation of Christianity should last, and that is to the end of the World.

2. No Man will deny, but that those three thousand Souls converted by St. Peter's Sermon, did receive the Holy Ghost; for St. Peter expressly promises them, *Acts* ii. 38. *Repent and be baptiz'd every one of you, in the Name of Jesus Christ, for the Remission of Sins, and ye shall receive the Gift of the Holy Ghost;* and this was very common in those Days, for true Penitents to receive the Holy Ghost immediately upon their Baptism, and sometimes before their Baptism, as *Cornelius* and his Company, *Acts* x. 44, 48. And though by the Holy Ghost, in those Places, are meant the miraculous Gifts of the Holy Ghost, speaking with Tongues, healing Diseases, &c. yet it must be granted, that in their Conversion, they had the sanctifying Spirit of God sent upon them; yet these very Persons, that had so receiv'd the Spirit, continu'd in breaking of Bread, and in Prayer, as we are told, *Acts* ii. 42. And that by breaking of Bread there, is not meant sitting down to their private and ordinary Meals, is evident from hence, because it is mention'd as a Part of their Devotion and publick Worship, to which their ordinary Diet cannot be referr'd, and therefore it must be the Eucharist, or this Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, that's meant by it; for by that Term it was usually express'd in the primitive Church, as we see *1 Cor.* x. 16,

3. Those very *Corinthians* to whom the Apostle writes in the Place afore-mention'd, and gives a Command to shew forth the Lord's Death in this Sacrament, 'till he came, had already receiv'd the Spirit of God, as we read *1 Cor. ii. 12.* Now we have receiv'd, not the Spirit of the World, but the Spirit which is of God, that we might know the Things that are freely given us of God: And to this Purpose he adds, *1 Cor. vi. 11:* Such were some of you, but ye are wash'd, but ye are sanctify'd, but ye are justify'd in the Name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God. These Men then had receiv'd the Spirit of God, and therefore, when the Apostle, writing to them, *Chap. xi.* saith, That they should shew forth the Lord's Death, 'till he come, most certainly he cannot mean, 'till he come to you in the Spirit, for they had receiv'd this Spirit already, and he was already come to them in the Spirit; and what Sense would it have been, to say, Ye that have receiv'd the Spirit of Christ, must shew forth his Death, 'till he come to you in the Spirit? just as good Sense, as if a Man should say, Ye that are in *London*, must do such a Thing 'till you come to *London*; so that if this were the Sense, the Apostle must have contradicted himself, or spoken that which no Body knew what to make of. It follows therefore, that since by his coming in Scripture is frequently meant, his coming to judge the World, as *Rev. xxii. 20.* *1 Cor. iv. 5.* *Luke xviii. 8.* that there it hath the same Sense, because without it, the Words will not bear a reasonable Construction.

4. The Design of the Apostle in this 11th Chapter, is, to rectify several Mistakes, and Errors, and Abuses that were crept in among the *Corinthians*, in their Administration and eating of the Lord's Supper, and this is intimated, *v. 17, 18.* so that his Intent in writing to them, must be to inform them how they were to behave themselves in the Use of this Ordinance, what Exorbitancies they were to abandon, what evil Customs they were to retrench, what vulgar Errors they were to

beware

beware of; and consequently, his Intent could not be to abolish this Sacrament, or to teach them to use it no longer than Christ should come to them in the Spirit. He that gives a Man Directions about a good Work, in what manner he is to perform it, what he is to take Heed of in the Practice of it, what Rocks and Stumbling-blocks he is to shun, doth not perswade him to leave the good Work undone, or to neglect it, but chalks out to him only the Way he may walk in with Safety, doth still allow the Work to be of eternal Obligation only, that it may be acceptable to God, bids him beware of the Shelves and Sands he may run upon in the Prosecution of it; and though, in Reformation of Abuses, the Thing it self which gave Occasion to the Abuse, is very often cancell'd and taken away, yet that Rule holds only in Things indifferent. In Duties, and Things commanded, such as the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper is, this could not be practis'd, for if ten thousand Abuses were committed about Prayer, yet Prayer would still be a Duty; and therefore the Apostle, reforming the Errors of the *Corinthians* in the Administration of this Sacrament, cannot be suppos'd to abrogate the Sacrament it self; for as he saith, v. 20. *He had receiv'd it of the Lord*, i. e. by way of a commanded Duty, which therefore could not be abolish'd.

5. Let us admit of this odd Expression of Christ's *coming to them in the Spirit*: If a Man have receiv'd the Spirit of Christ, that's so far from being a sufficient Reason to justify his staying away from this Sacrament, that it is a powerful Motive to come to it; not only because he that hath the Spirit of Christ, will be sure to do what Christ commands him, but because the Spirit of Christ must be cherish'd, preserv'd, kept warm, and made much of; which is not to be done, but by frequent Contemplations of God's Love, and Charity and Compassion to our immortal Souls, whereof this Sacrament doth not only put us in mind, but gives us a faithful Representation. The Spirit of God within us, must



be preserv'd by the Use of such Means God hath appointed; and since this Sacrament is one of these Means, he that neglects it, cannot promise himself a long Continuance of that Spirit in his Soul; and what if Men that have frequented this Ordinance, have found no Good by it, for that must be their own Faults, and because they come to it like Swine, no wonder if they come away from it in no better Condition.

6. Tho' it is readily granted, that true Believers, in their first Conversion, receive the Spirit of Christ, yet that puts no Stop to their receiving larger and greater Influences of it, by the Use of this Sacrament: As Grace is begun in their first Conversion, so it is increas'd by a conscientious Use of this Ordinance. The coming to it, doth not abate the Power of this Spirit, but advances it. This Ordinance being a spiritual Ordinance, the Spirit of Christ is the more likely to exert its Virtue in a sincere Believer that frequents it. The Cross of Christ, which is Foolishness to the *Greek*, is Wisdom to the *spiritual Man*, and the more he looks upon it with suitable Devotion, the greater Courage and Strength he will receive from it, to fight the Battels of the Lord. The Spirit of Christ, that works in a true Believer, works by rational Arguments, by Arguments that are most apt to prevail with rational Men; and since nothing can be a more effectual Argument, than the Love of Christ, manifested on the Cross, and particularly in the Sacrament of the Cross, it must follow, that the first Operations of Christ's Spirit in the Soul, are no Hinderance to his farther Operations in this Holy Sacrament.

7. It's true, in this Sacrament, external Symbols and Elements are made Use of, but that's not at all improper, or inconsistent with a Gospel State; nor do these Symbols hinder any Man from worshipping God in Spirit and in Truth, but rather promote it. If under the Gospel, Men may make no Use of external Tokens, to put them in mind of spiritual Things, the  
Apostle

Apostle was out in his Divinity, when he tells us, *That the invisible Things of God are clearly seen, being understood by the Things which are made, even his eternal Power and Godhead, Rom. i. 20.* Christ, indeed, abolish'd the burthensome Symbols of the ceremonial Law, but did no where tell us, that he would leave no Symbols at all in his Church to remember him by: And though we grant what the Apostle saith, *Col. ii. 20, 21. Wherefore, if ye be dead with Christ from the Rudiments of the World, why, as though living in the World, are ye subject to Ordinances, touch not, taste not, handle not?* yet it plainly appears from his Discourse, that he reprehended no other but *Judaizing* Christians, who having embrac'd the Christian Religion, were still observant of the ancient Ceremonies which *Moses*, while the Church was in its Minority, had given to the *Jewish* People; such as were Distinctions of Meats and Drinks, touching dead Bodies, or any Thing that was defil'd with Leprosy, touching any Thing unclean, whether Man or Beast, &c. whereof a large Account is given in *Levit. vii. 21.* so that this Saying doth not reverse the Symbols us'd in the holy Sacrament, they being of another Nature, and instituted upon a different Design, and so far from evacuating a spiritual Worship, that those become most spiritual Persons, that frequently exercise themselves in a devout Use of it; and therefore what Arrogance must it be, for Men to think themselves wiser than Christ himself! and when he, whose Wisdom cannot, by searching, be found out, hath given us these Symbols, and by them thought fit to help our Infirmities, to fancy that Christ did more than he need to have done, as if he understood not our Natures better than we? Those that look upon these Symbols, as Crutches for weaker Christians to lean upon, and such as they themselves have no need of, had need examine and search their Hearts better than hitherto they have done, lest they be unable, when the Time comes, to stand before the Son of Man.

II. Why

II. Why this Sacrament is to last in the Christian Church to the end of the World, or till Christ come to Judgment, may easily be guess'd at; for,

1. The Means of Grace are the same, and unalterable to the end of the World; and whatever Things bore the Name of ordinary Means of Grace, in the Apostles Days, still bear that Name, and shall bare it, 'till Heaven and Earth do perish; for God intended but one Gospel to the Christian World, even that Gospel which we have, and after it we are to expect no other: This is to serve the Church, while it is a Church; and as the Church is to last to the Consummation of all Things, so this Gospel is to last; for which Reason it is expressly call'd, *The eternal Gospel*, Rev. xiv. 6. And the Apostle is very peremptory in his Assertion; *Though we, or an Angel from Heaven, should preach any other Gospel, meaning either now, or hereafter, than what we have preach'd to you, let him be accurs'd*, Gal. i. 8. And if the Gospel be to last to the end of the World, this Ordinance of the Lord's Supper, in the Church, must needs last as long, for this is Part of the Gospel, as much as Prayer, Preaching, or any other Message deliver'd in that Book. That which is most properly call'd the Gospel, or glad Tidings, is the Mystery of God's reconciling the World to himself in *Christ Jesus*, and this is in an eminent manner express'd in this Sacrament; so that this Sacrament is the principal Part of the Gospel, the chief Subject it treats of, the principal Thing it aims at, the very Foundation of the whole: *For other Foundation can no Man lay, than that is laid, which is Christ*, saith St. Paul, 1 Cor. iii. 12. Nay, he determin'd with himself, *not to know any Thing, save Jesus Christ, and him crucify'd*; which is the very Purport and Scope of this Ordinance; and if the Gospel be a Thing perpetual and eternal, the principal Part of it, without all Peradventure, must be so.

2. The



2. The Comforts of Christian Souls, are to last while Christians live in the World, and that by Virtue of Christ's Pontifical Prayer, John xvii. 20, 21. *Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also, which shall believe on me thro' their Word, i. e. to the End of the World; that they all may be one, as thou Father art in me, and I in thee; that they also may be one in us; than which, there cannot be greater Comforts; and if such are to last to the World's End, the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper must needs be of the same Perpetuity; for from hence flow the greatest Comforts of true Believers, this assuring us, that as the material Bread, by eating, is united to our Bodies, so is Christ united to our Souls, or our Souls united to him, as Members to their Head; and to be one with Christ, is such a Treasury of Comforts, that there is no Affliction, no Condition so mean, or so calamitous, but may receive Ease and Content from this Consideration: For if I am one with Christ, my blessed Redeemer will be concern'd for me, will take Care of me, will be with me in the Tryals that fall to my Share, will Support me under Temptations, assist me with his Grace, relieve me by his Presence, subdue Satan under my Feet shortly, will furnish me with Arguments to resist, will not leave me when I die, but convey and conduct my Soul where her Head is, that it may be for ever with her Lord, and will make me Partaker of the same Glories too, which himself is possess of. By this Sacrament we become one with Christ Jesus, and this Comfort being to attend sincere Christians, while Christians are in the World, the Means whereby that Union is made, must necessarily last as long as Christianity lasts, i. e. to the Day of Judgment.*

3. *Lo, I am with you, saith Christ to his Disciples, who were Representatives of all future Christian Congregations, that should maintain the Purity of his Doctrine and Morals, to the End of the World, Matth. xxviii. 20. This is not to be understood of his Bodily Presence, or Human Nature, for that was to be tras-*

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ted into his Father's Kingdom; and with respect to that, he had told his Followers before; that *they should not have him always with them*, Matth. xxvi. 11. And as to his divine Nature, tho' the Words may be referr'd to that, yet it is to be noted, that he spake these Words, as one *who had all Power given him in Heaven, and in Earth*, v. 18. and therefore as Mediator, or the promis'd *Messiah* of the World; and if he spake these Words as Mediator, or Head of the Church, it must follow, that he meant them of his being with them, and their Followers to the World's End, by his Spirit, and Virtue, and Influence in their observing all Things whatsoever he commanded them, as the Words immediately preceding do evince; for he doth not tie his special Presence to a bare Function of Men, as the *Romanists* falsely infer, but to Obedience; and as Baptism was one of the Things he commanded them to use and observe; in the Verse before, for the Lord's Supper, and Celebration of it, was another; so that if Christ's Presence be necessary to the World's End, and that Presence be ty'd to Obedience, and this Sacrament be one of the Things he hath commanded, and in which he must be obey'd, in order to his gracious Presence, this Ordinance also must be necessary, and must needs be kept up to the End of the World.

4. Christ's Church is to last to the Word's End, for it is for his Church's Sake, that the World stands so long as it doth, as the World was created upon that Account, because God meant to gather a Church out of the World, out of the foreseen corrupt Mass of Mankind; so it is preserv'd upon that Account, even that the Number of those that shall be sav'd, may be compleated; which great Truth, is, I believe, aim'd at by the Apostle, Col. i. 15, 16, 17, 18. and to this End, this Church is said to be so durable, and so firm, that the *Gates of Hell shall not be able to prevail against it*, Matt. xvi. 18. The Devil, we may be confident, will endeavour to batter it to the very last Moment of the

World's

World's Duration; and if, with all his Stratagems, and continu'd and lasting Assaults, he shall not be able to conquer, or to destroy it, it must stand and last as long as those Assaults do last. The Apostle therefore makes mention of sincere Christians, that will *be alive at Christ's coming to Judgment*, 1 Thess. iv. 17. and consequently the Church will last till then; and if the Church is to last to the World's End, the Marks of that Church must last as long. It's true, Holiness of Life is one Mark, but that's not all the Marks that Christ's Church must have. The Sacraments are Marks too, and Marks whereby it may be better known, than by Holiness. Not but that Holiness is the principal Ornament of the Church; but as those that are to join themselves unto the Church, are generally more inquisitive after the Constitutions and Ordinances of it, and the Means whereby that Holiness is effected, than after any Thing else; so this Sacrament being Part of those Means, and therefore one of the necessary Marks, it must last to the End of the World, as much as the Church it self, and as long as there is any Probability of Mens joining themselves to the Church; and by this Means, Holiness of Life is signally promoted, as Experience sufficiently witnesses. As Christians in general, so the Church of Christ, or the respective Societies of Christians, professing Christ's Doctrine, and Imitation of his Life, are compar'd to *a City set on a Hill, and which cannot be hid*, Matt. v. 14. Not that Christ's Church must always appear outwardly magnificent and glorious, thereby to attract the Eyes of Spectators; no, but that the Purity of Doctrine, and sound preaching of the Word, and the due Administration of the holy Sacraments, together with Innocence of Life, must make it visible, and this, it may be, under the greatest Persecution, and when a severe Tempest falls upon her, by these Marks she may still be known; and if these are her Marks, these Marks must last as long as the Church it self.

III. The



III. The Time therefore, to which this holy Sacrament is to last, even Christ's coming to Judgment, may very justly be taken into Consideration in the receiving of the blessed Eucharist. I hinted so much, *Ch. 1. Fa. 9.* But must, upon this Occasion, enlarge upon it: For,

1. This Consideration will help to encourage us to Patience under Reproaches, Injuries, and Mens unrighteous Dealing with us. It serves to quiet the Soul, to think that Christ knows my Sufferings, and the Injuries that are done me, and sees my Integrity and Innocence, and will clear me in the last Day, before the whole World: What need I resent such an Affront, when the Son of God takes Notice of it; and if I am patient under it, will, in that Great Day, plead my Cause, set the Sinner's Transgression (if he repents not) before his Eyes, and confound him; not that I am to wish that Confusion of the Offender; but my Consideration that Christ will actually do it, may promote my Contentedness under that Affliction. What need I revile my Persecutors, when he, for whose Sake I endure that Persecution, will sufficiently vindicate me in that Day, for it is a *righteous Thing with God, to recompence Tribulation to those that trouble you*, saith St. Paul, *2 Thes. i. 6, 7, 8.* This Judge will at last discover, how Men were mistaken in us, how unjust their Censures were, what sinister Constructions they put upon our Actions, how malicious their Slanders were, how unjust the Punishments they inflicted on us, how inhuman, how contrary to Charity, all their ill Language was; *He shall bring forth our Righteousness as the Light, and our Judgment as the Noon Day*, Psal. xxxvii. 6. And this Consideration must needs be very effectual to promote Patience.

2. This Consideration will help to increase our Confidence, and arm us against Distrust and Diffidence, for if the Powers of Darkness would fright us from laying hold on Christ's Merits, because he will be a very severe Judge in the last Day, the timorous Christian may

answer

answer thus: True, he will be my Judge, but he hath promis'd to be a Father too to those that fear him: He'll be my Judge indeed, but he is a Judge of my Flesh, and of my Bone, and who will have Regard to my Infirmities: He'll be my Judge, but he is my Head withal, who will be tender of his Members: He'll be my Judge, but he is a merciful High-Priest withal, who will be my Advocate, and answer the Objections I cannot confute. I will cling to his Precepts, I will not wickedly depart from him, I will express my Love to him in holy Obedience, I will dread his Judgments, and make his Mercy a Motive to Purification. I will not give Place to the Devil, I will fight against his Temptations, I will stand upon my Watch, I will not lie asleep in the Bed of Sin, I will get up, if I chance to fall. I will rise again when I am overtaken in a Fault; I will accuse myself, and beg his Pardon; I will endeavour to walk worthy of the Vocation wherewith I am call'd, with all Lowliness, and Meekness, and Long-suffering, I will not take Part against him with his Enemies. This is the Work I have resolv'd upon, according to this Rule I will walk; and such a Soul, I know, this gracious Judge will not cast away, nor condemn; what Inadvertencies I may run into, I will not justify, but strive against them, and I doubt not, but his Cross will cover them, while my Heart is sincere, and my Soul is ever toward him. This Judge will absolve me, he will deal favourably with me, as with a Person whom he hath redeem'd. I will look upon the Promises, and apply them. He hath promis'd, that he will not take away his Kindness utterly, from such as love him; while I live, I will love him, and I question not, but as severe as he is to the Obstinate and Untractable, he will visit me with everlasting Kindness.

the Day of Vengeance.

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This sacrament being a standing Ordinance, and a notable Means of Grace, search as Prayer and hear-  
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*The Preceeding Considerations improv'd, and reduced to Practice.*

I. **O** Let us admire the Goodness of God, and his marvellous Care of our everlasting Welfare! He sees how slippery our Natures are, how fickle, how mutable, how changeable, how apt to turn from the holy Commandment deliver'd to them, and therefore he ties us in Bonds, in Covenants, and in Sacraments of Virtue, whereof the Lord's Supper is the strongest, the greatest, and most sacred, and therefore the best Defensive and Guard against the Encroachments of Temptations; insomuch, that he who can break through this Mound, and will not be kept in by Arguments drawn from the Death of Christ, but, in despite of the Blood of the Covenant, he hath drunk and seal'd his Promise with, will plunge himself into known Sins; that Man's Case is desperate, that Man is truly resolv'd to be miserable, and will die though the Lord Jesus calls to him from the Cross, *Live, in thy Blood, live*: He that can swear, and vow to God, in this Sacrament, vow upon the Body and Blood of Christ, that he'll be drunk no more, and swear no more, and lie and cheat no more, and yet forgets the Oath of God, that is upon his Soul, and dares fall to his old Sins again; that Man's last State is worse than the first, and he flights him, by whom he must be sav'd, despises him, who alone can make him happy, refuses that Blood, which alone can cleanse him, undervalues the only Champion that can secure him against the Rage of the roaring Lyon, loses and rejects the Prop which alone can support him against the Wrath of an offended God, and affronts that Friend, which alone can help and comfort him in the Day of Vengeance.

II. This Sacrament being a standing Ordinance, and a notable Means of Grace, as much as Prayer and hearing

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ing the Word of God, it must necessarily follow, that Men, who look for Grace and Salvation, must make as great Conscience of this, as of any other: and if they account it a Sin to neglect Prayer, and hearing the Word, they must look upon it as sinful too, to neglect this Ordinance. If this be a Means of Salvation, as well as the rest, he that hopes to be sav'd, must very seriously make Use of this Means, else he can but have little Hopes of arriving to the End without the Means. Surely, this Sacrament is a Means whereby you and I must come to love the Lord *Jesus Christ*; a Duty of that Consequence, that he that loves him not in Sincerity, lies under a severe Threatening, and is liable to a dreadful Curse, 1 Cor. xvi. 22. But how shall we ever love him to any Purpose, except we use the Means whereby that Love must be rais'd and kindled in our Breasts? Doth any Man hope to thrive in the World, that will not bestir himself, become active in his Profession, and apply himself to Labour? Doth any Man hope to arrive to Learning and Scholarship, without Books or Reading? Doth any Person hope to keep himself warm in Winter, that puts on no Cloaths? Or, was ever any so foolish, as to hope to come to his Journey's End, if he sits still in a Tavern or Ale-house by the Way? If this Sacrament be a Means of obtaining Happiness, will that Happiness fall to our Share, without using the proper Means? If thou refusest to come to this Ordinance, how can God be kind to thee, how can he visit thee with the Favour he bears to his own People? How can he wash thee with the Blood of the Lamb? How can he make thee Blessed, and a Companion of *Seraphims*, and give thee a Right to the Treasury of Christ's Merits, when thou neglectest the Means whereby these Mercies must be consign'd and apply'd to thy Soul; And therefore,

III. How wretched, how sad must be the Case of that Soul, which neglects to shew forth the Lord's Death in this Ordinance, when the Lord shall come to Judgment?

ment? When the Son of God shall appear in all his Glory, and the Sinner, who neglected this Holy Sacrament, shall be brought before him, it will not be an ordinary Fright the Wretch will be in; especially, when the King of Glory shall accost and ask him, How canst thou hope to share in my Glory, that didst not think my Death worth remembering in the Congregation of my Saints? How canst thou hope to participate of my Happiness, that wouldst not weep at my bitter Passion? How canst thou hope to be advanc'd to my Throne, who wast asham'd to look upon me hanging on the Cross? How canst thou hope to enter into thy Master's Joy, that wouldst not, by lively Representations of my Suffering, in the Sacrament I ordain'd, be melted into Tears? How canst thou hope for a Seat in the eternal Mansions, where no defil'd Thing must enter, that wouldst not cleanse thy self from Filthiness? Or how couldst thou hope to be cleans'd, that wouldst not make Use of my Blood to wash thy self? Here none can be happy that were not holy upon Earth, and how couldst thou expect to be holy, that didst neglect the Means which was intended to enrich thy Soul with Holiness? Such an Address of such a Majestick Person, and to an Offender too, that knows, and cannot but know, that all this is true, must necessarily strike the Malefactor dumb, fill him with Horror, and make him cry out, though too late, *O that my Head were Water, &c.* Expostulations of displeas'd Princes with their Servants, that have acted contrary to their Will in Things of far less Moment, have cast them into Grief, and Swoons, and fatal Diseases; and we must needs conclude, that in the Case we speak of, as the Person offended is greater than the most puissant Prince in the World, and the Neglect greater, than if a Man had neglected to provide for the Security of a temporal Kingdom, so the Expostulations will be more terrible, and the Sinners Heart, to whom they shall be spoken, in far greater Consternation.

IV. This

IV. This shews with what Temper and Disposition we ought to come to this Holy Table; even, with the same Temper we would, or desire to be in, if within a few Hours we were sure to be summon'd to Judgment. Were any of you to appear to-morrow Morning before the Bar of God, and had you all imaginable Assurance of it, that, by such a Time, you must certainly attend there, would you lie, or swear, or dissemble, or break into a Passion, or pray carelessly, or be backward to do good, or be averse from holy Thoughts and Discourses, &c. I trow, not; and as you would not appear before the Judge with an unmortify'd Temper of Mind, so neither can it be adviseable to appear before him at this Table, with such a Disposition. As the appearing before his Judgment-Seat, would make you call your most serious Thoughts together, and make you loath the Charms, the Enticements, and the alluring Temptations and Suggestions of the Flesh, and of the World; so your appearing at this Table requires the same Inclinations: For, as in the Day of Judgment, the King will come forth and behold the Persons cited into that Court, to see whether they are qualify'd for Heaven and Happiness; so in this Feast, he comes to look upon the Guests, and to see who comes with a worldly and carnal Disposition, and takes as much Notice of the Frame and Temper of your Hearts, as he will do in the last Day. Here thy great Master comes, and takes a View of thy Thoughts, Words, Desires, Affections, and Actions, whether they proceed from a Principle of Love and Submission. Happy the Soul that sits down at this Table with a Sense of her Duty, and the Greatness and Goodness of the Master of the Feast; for such a Soul anticipates her future Bliss, and feels, in some Measure, the Sweetness and Comfort of the joyful Absolution which shall be pronounc'd upon her with greater Solemnity in the last Day, even this, *Come ye blessed of my Father, receive the Kingdom, &c.*



## The P R A Y E R.

**O** Thou eternal Wisdom, who alone knowest what is best for me, who hast establish'd this Ordinance in thy Church, and ordain'd it as a Means whereby thy living Members may come, in the Unity of the Faith, unto a perfect Man. It shall be establish'd for ever, as the Moon, and as a faithful Witness in Heaven: Give me, O give me, Perseverance in the Use of it, O *Jesu*! Thou art the promis'd Seed, the promis'd *Messiah*, the promis'd Desire of all Nations! Thou art the fruitful Vine; and by the precious Liquor that drops from thee, innumerable Souls are cherish'd and refresh'd! Thy Sacred Name is as Ointment pour'd out! I smell the rich Composition. My Soul doth gather Strength and Life from that Perfume. I am the wounded Man that's fallen among Theives; O let thy Blood heal me of my Plagues! Thou hast been lifted up to the Cross, that the Enemy of Mankind might be trodden down. O let me participate of the Virtue of that Exaltation, that I may trample upon his Temptations. Thou hast been lifted up to draw me after thee, and to withdraw my Heart from worldly Desires and Affections. O lift me up from the Earth, that I may relish the Comfort of thy Exaltation. Thou wast lifted up, that thou mightest be beheld by all. O let me look upon thee, whom I have peirc'd by my Sins, that I may mourn for them bitterly. Thy holy Arms were stretch'd out, that thou mightest embrace

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all that come unto thee. I come, Lord! Take me into thy Arms and love me! O let thy Cross be my Security against all my Enemies! Let thy Wounds be my Refuge in the Hour of Temptation! Let that innocent Blood, that dropp'd from thy Hands, and Feet, and Side, wash away the Spots and Stains of my abominable Actions. Henceforward my Hands and my Heart shall be lifted up in Prayer, and Praise, and Love, and Devotion. O direct me, and give me Grace to obey thy Directions, and leave me not 'till I am past all Danger: O see me safe thro' the Wilderness of this World, that I may for ever admire and adore thee in thy everlasting Kingdom. *Amen.*





## C H A P. XVII.

Of eating and drinking unworthily in this Ordinance, and the Guilt the unworthy Receiver incurs thereby.



## The C O N T E N T S.

*Both good and bad Men frighted with the Thoughts of eating and drinking unworthily, but the Good without just Cause. Wherein unworthy eating and drinking doth not consist shewn in thirteen Particulars, with the Reason of the Assertion; and wherein it doth consist. The Danger of unworthy eating and drinking prov'd to lie in making our selves guilty of the Body and Blood of the Lord. How Men involve themselves in that Guilt, discover'd. A great Difference betwixt receiving unworthily, and being not worthy to receive. The great Imprudence and Weakness of those that are loth to part from their Sins, and therefore are unwilling to come, for fear they should make themselves guilty of the Death of Christ, and of Damnation. The Impudence and Boldness of others, who come to this Sacrament, receive unworthily, and are not concern'd at their Danger. The Joys and Comforts which arise from receiving worthily. The Prayer.*

I. **T**Hough from the Premises, the Reader may easily guess what it is to eat and drink unworthily, and tho' in Chap. IV, some general Notions concerning it have been laid down, yet, since it is a Point which frights, not only bad Men, but even some of those who are otherwise piously inclin'd, from coming to the Lord's Table,



Table, it will be necessary to give a distinct Explication of it, that neither the Bad may think they gain any Thing by abstaining, nor the Good be discourag'd from coming. As bad Men have no Sense of spiritual Things, which makes them live merrily, in Neglect of commanded Duties, so not a few of those, whose Hearts are tender, are apt to discompose their Minds with needless Scruples, whereby they too often deprive themselves of the Comforts they might reap from God's Ordinances, and besides expose themselves to strong Temptations of the Devil, who takes Pleasure to see good Men in Confusion, hoping, that one Time or other they may fall into his Net, and when they know not how to extricate themselves out of the Labyrinths, will shake off the Yoke of all Religion, and become his Votaries, run into the other Extream, and turn either careless or prophane. To prevent these and other Dangers, it will be convenient to discourse of this eating and drinking unworthily, *first*, Negatively, what it is not; and *secondly*, what it is, and wherein the Sin consists: And therefore,

II. To eat and drink unworthily, is not, 1. *To eat and drink at this Table with a weak Faith.* By a weak Faith I mean such a Belief of the Truth, and Necessity of the Things commanded in the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, as makes the Soul ready and willing to do the Things requir'd of her, but is attended with great Fears and Doubts, with Wavering and Inconstancy; and this Weakness proceeds not so much from Want of Will to submit to Christ, as from Want of Understanding either the Extent of the Grace of God, or the Nature of the Gospel of Peace, or the Design of God in his Providences, or the Latitude of true Christian Liberty, which Defect must needs cause great Mistrusts of our Safety, Danger of being scandaliz'd with little Things, and Unsteadiness in Holy Duties, as we see, *Rom. xiv. 1, 2, &c.* yet this Weakness of Faith doth not make a Man an unworthy Receiver.

1. Because

1. Because Christ is willing to receive such into Favour, and he express'd this Willingness in his kind Behaviour to the Man we read of, *Mark ix. 22.* who believ'd, indeed, but waveringly, and soon after cried out, and said, with Tears in his Eyes, *Lord! I believe, help thou my Unbelief.* The Disciples of our Lord, upon their first adhering to him, were at the best but weak in Faith, and therefore Christ calls to them so often, *O ye of little Faith,* yet he doth not therefore reject them. He cherishes the very Seeds of Faith, and when it is no bigger than a Grain of Mustard-seed, he makes much of it: Though the Branches of it be but tender, yet he doth not root up the Tree, or command the *Husbandman* to cut it down, lest it should cumber the Ground, or throw it into the Fire: To which Purpose, there is an excellent Character given of him, *Isa. xl. 11.* *He shall feed his Flock like a Shepherd, and gather the Lambs with his Arms, and carry them in his Bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young.* There are Lambs in his Flock as well as Sheep, and as these two require various management, so both may be confident of his Tendernefs. All Stars do not shine alike, yet even those that give not so great a Brightness, shall be preserv'd, as well as the greater Luminaries. Love is an acceptable Present to him; and though in some, like Fire under green Wood, it burns but dimly, yet he'll quench it no more, than he will the more blazing Flames. But then, when I say, he will not frown on those that are weak in Faith, I do not mean such as have no saving, no working Faith, and as refuse to work the Work of God, such are Infidels, not Men weak in Faith. Weakness of Faith supposes Readiness to good Works, but the various Doubts which attend it, cause this Weakness. That there are such Persons, as *Children in Grace*, St. *John* assures us, *1 John ii. 12.* Yet even their Sins he is willing to forgive for his Name's sake.

2. Because this Sacrament was instituted for the strengthening of our Faith. The weak in Faith are call'd  
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and invited to it, that they may grow more robust and lively; and to this end, Christ offers himself, in this Ordinance, as spiritual Meat and Drink, that living upon him, and feeding upon him, we may be brought up to greater Perfection; that our Souls may follow him with greater Alacrity, Grace may become more active, and Faith more solid, and more defecated from Hypocrisy: And as here we contemplate Christ, so we behold his extraordinary Faith in God, that seeing it, it may give us Courage to tread in his Steps. His Father's Promises to him, as Man, and Mediator, were great, and large, and extensive: God had promis'd, that he should be King of Heaven and Earth, that all Power should be put into his Hand, and that he should be, as it were, his Lieutenant-General; *Ask of me, saith he, Psal. ii. 8. And I shall give thee the Heathen for thine Inheritance, and the uttermost Parts of the Earth for thy Possession, thou shalt break them with a Rod of Iron, thou shalt dash them in Pieces like a Potter's Vessel.* There was little Probability of the Performance of these Promises, when he was mock'd, derided, scourg'd, beaten, bruise'd and crucify'd; when he was made liker a Worm than a Man; the Reproach of Men, and despis'd of the People; when all that saw him laugh'd him to scorn, and did shoot out their Lips, and shook their Heads, saying, *He trusted in the Lord, that he would deliver him, let him deliver him, seeing he delighted in him;* when many Bulls compass'd him, and strong Bulls of *Basan* did beset him round; when they gaped upon him with their Mouths, as ravening and roaring Lions; when he was pour'd out like Water, and all his Bones were out of Joint; when his Heart was like Wax, and melted in the midst of his Bowels; when his Strength was dried up like a Pot-herb, and his Tongue cleav'd to his Jaws, and he was brought into the Dust of Death; when Dogs compass'd him, and the Assemblies of the wicked did enclose him; when they pierc'd his Hands and his Feet, as *David* describes his Misery, yet in the midst of all these Disasters,

*Psal. 27. 6, 7, 8, 9, &c.*

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he believ'd the Promise of his Father would be punctually fulfill'd, which makes the Author of the Epistle to the *Hebrews* say, that for the Glory set before him, the promis'd Glory, *He endur'd the Cross, and despis'd the Shame*, Heb. xii. 2. His Faith bore him up under all these Floods of Ungodliness; so that he is not only the Author and Finisher, but also the Example of our Faith; an Example set before us in this Holy Sacrament, that we may light our Candle by his Fire, strengthen our Faith by his Plerophory and Confidence: And if this be the End of his being represented in this Ordinance, the weak in Faith cannot be excluded, nor can Weakness of Faith make a Person an unworthy Receiver.

Nor, 2. *Is it want of a total Purity, or of Freedom from all Sin, that makes a Person an unworthy Receiver*: It's true, the Gospel commands those who mean to receive worthily, to purge out the old Leaven, 1 Cor. v. 7, *And putting off the old Man with all his deceitful Lusts*, Eph. iv. 22. And whoever hopes to be Partaker of the Benefits of Christ's Death, his Purpose at least must be serious, and unfeign'd, without Partiality and Hypocrisy to renounce all Love and Affection to a sinful Life; but still there is a great Difference betwixt destroying the reigning Power of Sin, and being free from all Sin: Of the former, the aforesaid Passages must be understood, and the worthy Communicant must in sober Sadness mortify, and resolve to mortify the imperial Power of Sin in his Soul, so as not willingly and wilfully to yield unto the sinful Dictates of the Flesh, or of the World, but to prefer his God, and what he requires, before his own temporal Advantages: But from thence it follows not, that the worthy Receiver must not be so much as subject to Errors, and Inadvertencies, and falls by Surprise, and before he can well recollect himself; and therefore the Want of such Spotlessness, is not it that makes a Man eat and drink unworthily at this Table.

1. Because

1. Because this Feast is not instituted for Angels, but for Men. Angels have no Need of such Encouragements to Virtue, they being determin'd to Goodness. Were Men free from all Sin they would not stand in need of this Ordinance, which is intended to make sinful Men good, and good Men better. *Those that are whole need no Physician, but the Sick*; and as Christ is the Physician in this Sacrament, so they are the Sick he invites to come to him. The best Man that is, though he labours under no chronical Distemper, yet he hath Ailings still, and Infirmities about him, which want the Physician's Hand, and Medicine, which is here most graciously tender'd to him. The Scripture of the Old Testament calls Man *Enosh, infirm, weak, sickly*; and though good Men are arriv'd to a far better State of Health than Hypocrites and grosser Sinners, yet who, even of the strictest Mortals, can say, *I have made my Heart clean, so that no Spot shall be seen there*? This Sacrament therefore being ordain'd for Men, it must be granted, that it is ordain'd for sinful Men, not to encourage them in Sin, but to make them hate it, not only the bigger Stains, but even the Relicts of it, that remain in the Regenerate. To this End, Christ's Agonies and exquisite Torments are set before us in the Sacrament, the Torments, I mean, our Sins, inflicted and brought upon him, that that Sight may terrify us, and fill us with Abhorrency of that which hath made the Son of God so miserable.

2. No Sinners are excluded from this Sacrament, that are willing to reform their Hearts and Lives. *Those that, with Ephraim, will have no more to do with Idols, take with them Words, and turn unto the Lord, saying, take away all our Iniquity, and receive us graciously, so will we render the Calves of our Lips; Ashur shall not save us, neither will we say any more to the Works of our Hands, ye are our Gods, as it is said, Hos. xiv. 2, 3.* Such are call'd by the great Shepherd of the Sheep, not stubborn Sinners, but penitent Sinners; not obstinate

obstinate Sinners, but tractable Sinners; not Sinners that will be miserable, but Sinners that long to be deliver'd from their Misery; not Sinners that are resolv'd to walk on in the Imagination of their own Hearts, but Sinners who are ambitious of a clean Heart, and a new Spirit; not Sinners that will keep their Sins, but Sinners that are weary of them; not Sinners that still find Sweetness in their Sins, but Sinners who are sensible of the Bitterness of them; not Sinners who make a Mock of Sin, but Sinners to whom Sin is a Grief and Burthen; not Sinners that make a Covenant with Hell, but Sinners that break that Covenant, to be the Lord's Free-men: So that not to be free from Sin, is not to eat and drink unworthily.

Nor, 3. *Doth all Dulness in holy Duties make a Man an unworthy Receiver.* There is a Dulness, indeed, which proceeds from an Aversion to the holy Commands of the Gospel, with a voluntary Stupidity of Mind, and want of Relish of spiritual Things; and this, without all peradventure, is very prejudicial to the Soul, and a bad Preparative for the Communion, and no small Impediment to the Grace of God. But there is a Dulness which is the Result of Faintness, when the Spirits are spent, and the first Intenseness of the Mind is worn out: In such Cases, a Dulness and Deadness may easily rise, but much against our Wills, and, to be sure, without our Approbation. Nor is this Dulness to be seen only in temporal Concerns, but even in spiritual Duties and Devotions. When the first Heat of Devotion in the Morning is over, and the Spirits of the Blood, which were the Porters that serv'd to carry up our Prayers on high, are in some Measure tir'd, the Soul, that after this applies her self to the holy Communion in the publick Congregation, may want that Liveliness and Briskness of Thought, Desire, and Affections, because the first Flames, which were strongest in the Morning when we rose, are spent. Now, this Dulness doth not make a Person an unworthy Receiver: And the same Judgment



Judgment we are to make of that Dulness which rises from natural Imperfections and Sickneses, incident to good Men, as well as bad; such as Lethargies, Drop-  
lies, Scurvy, Consumption, and other Distempers, which are either beginning, or are come to a considerable Strength: Neither the one, nor the other, if they seize us at the Communion, do make us unworthy Receivers.

1. Because God doth not judge of us so much by the present Liveliness and Activity of our Spirits, as by the Sincerity of our Souls. Where the Soul is bent to please, God doth not regard Iniquity in her Heart, and preserves so much of Fear upon her Mind, as makes her that she would not offend God willfully, tho' it were to gain the Kingdoms of the World; is willing to be better inform'd, to have her Errors discover'd to her; is desirous to be strengthen'd in the inward Man; is still ready to embrace any Good, suggested to her from the Word of God, or the Ministers of his Ordinances; there the Soul hath Reason to bless God for the Sincerity that is in her, and to believe, that notwithstanding her present accidental or involuntary Dulness, he will meet her in this Sacrament with a favourable Aspect, bid her Welcome, and give her the glorious Blessings she expects in the holy Communion: *For, if there be first a willing Mind, it is accepted according to what a Man hath, and not according to what he hath not, saith the Apostle, 2 Cor. viii.*

12. If the Soul that finds a present Dulness, is willing to be rid of it; is so far from being pleas'd with it, that it is her Burthen; would be more lively in her Desires if she could; there God would certainly spread open his Arms to her, and receive her.

2. Because God rejects no Person for what he cannot help. I know, this is the common Plea of all unconverted Sinners: When they are exhorted to close with God, and to cashire their known Sins, or are reprov'd for continuing in them; the String they harp upon is this, That they cannot help it.

it. But not to mention, that by thinking or saying so, they make God a Liar, who saith, they can help it if they will use the Means the Holy Ghost prescribes; 'tis evident to all wise and considerate Men, that this Pretence of Impossibility is nothing but Resolution and Obstinacy to continue in the State they are in. And therefore, when I say, that God rejects none for what they cannot help, the Meaning is, for what he sees and knows they cannot help: As a Christian, who, upon the account of his Conscientiousness is cast into a Prison or Dungeon, God will not reject him for not frequenting the publick Ordinances; so here, for the Dulness that seizes upon pious Christians in their holy Performances, God will not withdraw his Kindness, especially where he sees, that either the Faintness of their Spirits, or the prevailing Distempers in their Bodies, baffle all their repeated and re-iterated Strivings to be lively and affectionate in their Addresses to God, and particularly in the holy Communion. In this Case, God regards rather the brave Intention of the honest Believer, and his swimming against the Stream, than the Want of what he desires: Nor will he condemn him for not doing that which he would do, and cannot. And the same is to be said of those blasphemous Suggestions I mention'd, and gave an Account of, *Chap. 14. Sect. 7. ¶. 4.* They being Things which no Man can help (for, who can hinder the Devil from tempting him?) if detested, they cannot make the Person that resists and abhors them, an unworthy Receiver, tho' they should fly or dart into his Mind in the Act of receiving. All that can be done to them, is, to abominate them when they come in; and tho' they may be the Devil's Sin, who frames these fiery Darts, and shapes them on his Anvil, yet they are not Sin unto the assaulted Person, who saith, *I renounce the Devil and all his Works.* There is no fighting of them with Swords and Spears; they are not to be cut in Pieces with Knives or Axes; are not to be expell'd by Forks and Weapons: Resistance, and Detestation, and

and Prayer, and Declarations of our contrary Belief, is all the Force that can be us'd; and while this is done, the Soul is safe under all those Skirmishes of the Enemy. Nay, who can promise themselves a greater Welcome to this Table, than those that resist Temptation? Resistance is a Virtue, and a Sign the Soul is touch'd with a Sense of God: 'Tis a Character of Grace, and Abhorrence of Evil; a Fruit of the Spirit; and those that are led by the Spirit, cannot but be worthy Communicants. Whatever Temptation we meet withal, while we consent not, we preserve the Safety of our Souls: And though it is true, that these blasphemous Suggestions come in sometimes so thick, and so fast, and make those strange Impressions on the Mind, that the Penitent cannot well tell whether he consents to them, or not; yet it being in a manner impossible we should consent to Things our very Nature abhors, and which we know to be against the common Principles rivited in our Souls, he that feels them, hath Reason to believe that he consents not to them, tho' for the present they stun him: However, when he recovers out of his present Fright and Consternation, if deliberately he rejects them, 'tis enough: And though they should follow him twenty Years together, yet if he resist and detest them twenty Years together, they cannot make him an unworthy Communicant.

4. *Impossibility of forgetting an Injury doth not make a Man an unworthy Receiver.* By not being able to forget an Injury, I mean, not being able so to put the Matter of Fact out of your Minds, that we shall never think of it, or remember that such an Injury was done unto us. 'Tis true, the uncharitable Man, as he is a Stranger to Christ's Religion, so it cannot be suppos'd that he will meet with any kind Entertainment at the Lord's Table: And whoever would not go away empty from this Ordinance, must from his Heart forgive the Offender who hath either wrong'd or disparag'd him, or wounded his



his good Name: Nay, so far he must forget the Injury too, as not to exercise Revenge when it lies in his Power; nor must he remember it with Wrath and Passion, or ill Language, or with an Intent or Resolution to withdraw from him the charitable Offices of Humanity, or with renewing his Grudge and Hatred to him, or with making the Remembrance an Argument and Motive to desist from the Good he intended him; for he must not forget to do good to Enemies, and such as have despitefully us'd him. And though no Person is, by the Law of the Gospel, oblig'd to make a Person who hath been notoriously false and treacherous to him, his bosom Friend and Familiar, or to trust him again without Fear or Suspicion, except he sees, and is sensible of the Offender's sincere Repentance; yet still the Injury must be so far forgotten, as not to deny or refuse to help the Offender in Things we can conveniently and easily serve him in. But to think sometimes of the Injury done to us, with Pity and Compassion to the Offender; or not to be able so to extinguish the Thoughts of it, that it shall not so much as beat upon our Minds again: This I say, doth not make a Person an unworthy Receiver.

I. Because God doth not intend the Destruction of our Faculties, whereof Memory is one: Never to remember an Injury, or not to be able so much as barely to think of it, supposes Destruction of our Memory. All that God intends in our Reformation, is the Destruction of our evil Qualities, and the Irregularities of our Faculties. His Design is not to annihilate our Minds, but the evil Thoughts that are apt to take up their Lodging there; not to abolish our Wills, but the Perverseness and Stubbornness that cleaves to them; and, consequently, not to destroy our Memories, but the Revenge, and Hatred, and Malice, and secret Grudges, which are apt to harbour there. Even then, when God presses upon us the Destruction of the Body of Sin, it is not, that we are to kill our natural Bodies, but the

the Mass of Corruption that lies in them. And tho' Christ bids us *cut off our right Hand*, yet he means no more than that the Sins should be reſected which cleave to it: And that is the Meaning too of *pulling out the Eye*, i. e. *the evil Looks*, and *unchaste Deſires*, and *fooliſh Concupiſcences*, which are apt to incorporate with that Organ. So that he who can ſo far raze an Injury out of his Memory, as to deſtroy his own Ill-will, his ill Deſigns, his evil Inclinations to the Offender, which are written there, his not being totally able to obliterate that ſuch a Thing was ever done to him, need not make him afraid that he ſhould be an unworthy Receiver in this Ordinance.

2. This Sacrament will help us totally to forget the Injury; or, if not totally to forget it, yet totally to forget requiting the Offender according to his Demerits; and ſo to forget it, that the Remembrance ſhall cauſe no Commotion, no Diſorder, no Tumults, no Riſings in our Minds: For here we are told, and here we are made to ſee, how God, that hath far greater Reason to ſtand upon Points of Honour, than any mortal Man, freely and graciouſly forgives and forgets our Sins and Offences againſt him, in the Blood of his Son, blots them out like a thick Cloud, and, notwithstanding all the Wrong we have offer'd to him, is willing to paſs by the fouleſt Treaſpaſſes; willing to open his Gates to us, tho' we have lock'd our ſelves out; willing to vouchſafe us his Smiles again, tho' we have forfeited the Light of his Favour; and willing to adopt us for his Children, tho' we have liv'd like Prodigals; which muſt needs be a great Help to make us forget the Wrongs we have ſuffer'd from unreaſonable Men: And therefore, he that is not able totally to forget, ought to come, that by this great Example of God's forgetting his Offences, he may be perſwaded totally to forget his Neighbour's Treaſpaſſes.

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5. Worldly

5. *Worldly Business, either a Day or a Week before a Man receives, doth not make him an unworthy Receiver.* By

*See Chap. 15. Sect. 5. ¶ 1.* Worldly Business, I mean lawful Business; not Playing, or Drinking, or going to Stage-Plays, or mis-spending our Time, &c. but such Business as appertains to an honest and lawful Calling or Business consider'd abstractedly from the evil Concomitants of it: For lawful Business is one Thing, and the Way of managing of it is another. A Man may manage even his lawful Business sinfully, and run himself into Danger; but following it without Sin, as it may happen that the Day or Week before he may have greater Occasions than ordinary to look after it; as this need not hinder him from a holy Life, so neither can it be a just Impediment to his receiving worthily.

1. Because it is our Duty to mind it on such Days of the Week as God hath permitted us to work in; which makes the Apostle enjoin us to *do our own Business*, and *work with our Hands*, without making any Distinction in Days, 1. *Thes. 4. 11.* 'Tis true, where publick Authority, either Civil or Ecclesiastical, appoints a Day in the Week to be kept holy, or a Festival, or a Fast, or where a Person, by a Vow, hath consecrated a certain Day in the Week, to spend it entirely in religious Duties, there working ought to be forborn; for Magistrates ought to be obey'd, and a Vow doth bind the Soul. But set aside these Cases, the Command to work, extends to all Days, except the *Lord's-Day*; and therefore, he that is to receive the holy Sacrament on the *Lord's-Day*, is not necessarily oblig'd to abstain from minding his lawful Business the Day before.

2. Lawful Business doth not, need not hinder a Man from preserving holy Thoughts, holy Desires, and holy Affections, if his Soul were acquainted with any before. A good Man, in the midst of his lawful Business, will keep God in his Eye, that he may not sin against him, that he may do what is just and righteous in his Sight,  
and



and that at Night he may reap Comfort from a Review of his Actions of the Day. Lawful Business is consistent with watching against Temptations, and keeping our selves unspotted from the Pollutions of the World; and this St. James calls *Pure Religion*, Jam. 1. 27. And if this pure Religion be join'd with our Business, it doth not see how our lawful Business, if we mind it the Day or Week before, can make us unworthy Receivers.

3. No Man hath so much lawful Business, but, if he pleases, he may find Time to retire, and enter into his Closet, and walk with God. Where a Man pretends that his lawful Business allows him no Time for Devotion, 'tis to be fear'd he either tells a Lie, or he manages his lawful Business very ill, or imitates the carnal sort of Mankind, who, when they have spent the whole Day, or the greatest Part of the Day, in Fooleries, and needless Business, give out, they have no Time, and can find no Time for God's Service. A conscientious Man, if he be really so, will take Heed how he conforms to the World in this Particular; and if he manages his Affairs with Discretion, I question not but he will find Time to ask his Heart what it is that is dearest to him, whether God, or the World? what his chief Aim or Design is, whether to be rich, or to be good? And as he will find Time to ask himself such Questions, so he will find Time for pious Exercises, whereby his Soul may be brought to a serious Sense of the Mystery propos'd in this holy Sacrament; and if he do so, his lawful worldly Business the Day or Week before, as it need not discourage him from coming to this holy Table, so it need not fill his Head with Doubts and Fears, that coming to it, having been engag'd in much Business the Day before, will make him an unworthy Communicant.

6. *Worldly Crosses, Troubles, and Disappointments*, do not make a Man an unworthy Receiver. I do not deny, but Crosses and Troubles of the World, if they fill the Mind with Torments and mistrustful Cares; if they depress

the Understanding, make it lie groveling on the Earth, and mind little else but second Causes; if they possess the Soul with despairing Thoughts, drive it into Discontent, draw it away from Heaven, render the Promises of God insipid to her, and do so far prevail with her, that the future Joys, and the Bliss of the other World, are insignificant Things to her, these Effects do not look very amiable in the Sight of God, are no very tempting Objects to the Son of God, the Master of this spiritual Feast; and are so far from being Allurements of his Blessings, that they are likelier to procure his Curse: But I consider worldly Crosses, as abstracted from all these Abuses; and, as such, they cannot make a Person eat and drink unworthily.

1. Because, what were the Communicants under the first Persecutions of the Church, but so many afflicted, distress'd, troubled, and evil-entreated Christians? Their Crosses, were great, their Afflictions heavy, and their Pressures grievous; they were in daily Danger of losing not only their nearest Relations, but their Lands, Houses, Possessions; they were hunted, pursu'd, driven from their Dwellings; the Heathens were set against them; the *Jews* were their Enemies; they were reproach'd, they were made Spectacles to Angels, and to Men, they were tormented, they were committed to wild Beasts; they were harrafs'd, beaten, bruis'd; they were wrongfully accus'd of Treason, of Sedition, of Atheism, of murdering their Children, of promiscuous Copulations, and of other Crimes; they were hated, branded with odious Names; they were charg'd with being the Cause of Plagues, Inundations, Famine, &c. yet nothing of these discourag'd them from coming to this Table; they came to it to chuse, and thought themselves the fitter to approach, because they were made conformable to Christ in his Afflictions.

2. A Man may have such Crosses, and yet be very consciencious. 'Tis far from being impossible to be afflicted, and yet good; miserable, and yet serious; destitute, and yet religious; hated, and yet a Lover of God. In the midst of the greatest Troubles, a Man may put his Confidence in God, praise him for his Goodness, rejoyce in him, because he hath promis'd him eternal Life; keep his Tongue from Evil, and his Lips from speaking Guile; take Occasion from his Troubles, to consider the Emptiness of sublunary Comforts, the Permanency of spiritual Consolations, the Sweetness of God's Favour, the Beauty of God's Providence, the Wisdom of his Dispensations, the Happiness of *Lazarus* in the midst of all his Sores and Biles, the Designs of God to make him humble and patient, and to fit him for eternal Happiness. And where a Person makes this Use of his Afflictions, there is nothing can dispose him better for receiving the holy Communion.

3. This Sacrament is an excellent Help to bear our Troubles and Misfortunes with a contented and chearful Mind; for here the Lord Jesus is represented to us as dumb under all Reproaches, unmov'd at all the bitter Language that is given him, silent under the Rage of Enemies, meek under the foulest Accusations, giving his Back to the Smiter, and not opening his Mouth under the Scorns and Derisions of his Adversaries; contented under all his Losses, couragious under all the Calumnies that false Witnesses invent against him, satisfy'd with the Will of God, bearing his Cross without Murmuring, answering calmly to his Oppressors, patient under his Scourges, ready to do Good to those that came to apprehend him. And is not this a powerful Motive to bear what Providence thinks fit to inflict upon us? And therefore Crosses and wordly Troubles, separated from the ill Management of them, cannot make a Person an unworthy Receiver. Where Men storm, and fret, and burn with Revenge under an Affliction, will be their own Carvers, will be vindicated their own



Way, that Way that Flesh and Blood suggests, and will rid themselves of their Trouble by unlawful Means; these, indeed, if they receive, they eat and drink unworthily: But that is not a necessary Effect of the Affliction, but a Product rather of their Wickedness and Carnality; which, instead of being cherish'd, must be cut off, and mortify'd.

7. *A Man's having formerly receiv'd unworthily, and coming again afterwards to the holy Sacrament, with a great Sense and Abhorrency of his former unworthy Receiving, doth not make him an unworthy Receiver.* For,

1. If it did, we might as well say, that he who hath sinn'd grievously, cannot safely venture on a true Repentance: To have done ill, is no Bar to a sincere Return, but a Motive to it; and tho' the Sin be never so great, yet, if he can so order and manage his Remorse, that it may be hearty, kindly, and attended with a real and universal Change of Life, and Love to Goodness, he hath no Reason to despair of Pardon; this being the great Comfort of the Gospel, *That Repentance and Remission of Sins, should be preach'd in the Name of Jesus, among all Nations, beginning at Jerusalem,* saith our Saviour, *Luke 24. 47.* And that which will illustrate this Saying, is, the Story, in *Sophronius*, of two old Men of exemplary Holiness, who travelling, *Soph. vel. Mosch. in prat. Spir. cap. 31.* and tired with their Journey, the Heat of the Weather also being great, they retir'd into a Stable or Barn that was hard by, where, thinking to be private, contrary to Expectation, they found three young Men carressing of an Harlot: However, not discourag'd with that ill Company, they retir'd into a Corner of the Barn, and there read the holy Evangelists. The Harlot, at once surpriz'd and charm'd with their Seriousness, drew near, and sat down by one of them, who thrust her away, wondering at her Confidence to join herself to their Company: To which she reply'd, *I beseech you, thrust me not away from you; for tho' I am laden with Sin, and have made a very ill Use of the Means of Grace,*

Grace, yet I find not that Christ drove the Harlot from him, that kneel'd down at his Feet. One of them soon answer'd her, saying, *That Harlot whom Christ receiv'd, did not continue an Harlot. To which she instantly made this Return, From this Time forward, I seriously renounce this evil Life of mine, and nothing shall divert me from the greatest Severities of Religion.* She was as good as her Word, receiv'd Instructions and Comfort from the old Men, follow'd their Directions, and retir'd from the World. And therefore, if a Man have receiv'd unworthily, and truly laments and deplores his former Presumption, applies himself to Newness of Life, and is transform'd into a Christian Temper, he may lawfully return to that Table, and there receive and expect Remission of Sin, where formerly he swallow'd Death and Poison; and tho' his Guilt hath been of a very deep Dye, yet Repentance, if unfeign'd, hath that almighty Power, that it can make *Ethiopians* white, and Deformity amiable. But then,

2. He that hath receiv'd unworthily, and comes to be sensible of it, and thereupon receives again, had need watch, and take Heed he do not return to his former Folly, for fear God be tir'd with pardoning, and speak Peace no more; for he will speak Peace unto his People, and to his Saints; but let them not return again unto Folly, saith the Psalmist, *Psal. 85. 8.* implying, that the Peace of God is not to be had at all Times, especially after frequent Contempt. There are Offences which provoke God to say, as it is *Judg. 10. 13.* *Ye have forsaken me, wherefore I will deliver you no more.* The Peace of God is no Trifle which Men may play withal, and command when they please; God makes another guise Account of it; where it is lost, it is not a very easy Matter to regain it; and so much we may guess at, from the Examples of good Men, who, thro' strong Temptations, have fallen into any great Sin; it hath cost them much Labour and Pain to recover, and God hath on purpose withheld his Peace from their Souls a long Time, that

they might learn how to prize and preserve it with greater Care, after its Return. It's folly to think God is such a one as we our selves, or that he is as willing to part with Peace and Pardon, as we to have it, whenever we stand in need of it. As it is one of the greatest Comforts Man can expect of God, so he expects it should be manag'd with Prudence and Cautiousness. It doth not lie like a Drug upon his Hand, which he is willing to be rid of whenever we are pleas'd to take it off: If we know not how to prize it, there are those that will, and by those few God can be glorify'd, while others bewail the Loss of it in outward Darknes.

*8. A Law-Suit that is depending, doth not necessarily make a Man an unworthy Receiver.*

1. If the Law-Suit be begun for small Things and Trifles, such as any wise and impartial considerate Man, were he consulted with, would judge to be trivial, and of no great Importance; or if it be commenc'd upon the Account of Revenge, or against Persons who are known to be insolvent, only to have our Will and base Humour gratify'd, and to have the Satisfaction of throwing the indigent Wretch into Prison; or if it be manag'd in a sinful Way, with opprobrious Language, and bitter Expressions, false Accusations, suborning of Witnesses against the adverse Party; or with harbouring Malice, Hatred, or secret Grudges in our Hearts against him; and we feel no godly Sorrow for it, *i. e.* do not resolutely, upon the Account of Christian Love and Charity, quit and renounce these evil Companions of our Souls, and yet come to this holy Table, there, without all Peradventure, we eat and drink unworthily, because we eat and drink without Consideration of the Love of Christ, and the Conditions of the Pardon we expect by his Cross; and the dangerous Meat we have swallow'd, is not vomited up, but lies raw and undigested in our Bowels, which must needs be a Bar to the Grace and Mercy of God, and our own Comfort. But then,

2. If



2. If the Law-Suit be commenc'd upon the Account of something that's of great Importance, either to our selves, or Friends, or Heirs; if there be no other Way to come to our Right, and ordinary References will not do; if it be merely to obtain Reparation for the Damages we have sustain'd, or are like to sustain; if these Suits be carry'd on with Meekness, with Justice, with using honest and lawful Means, with Candor and Ingenuity, without Addition of *the hidden Things of Dishonesty*, without supplanting the other Party, without wounding his good Name, or mis-representing Things of his Side, without catching at Bulrushes, or taking Advantages of his Infirmities; if the Ground and Motive of the Enterprize be only, that our Neighbour and we may both be satisfy'd in the Case that's in Dispute; if the Suit be manag'd without Pride or Passion, with Gentleness, and Continuation of our wonted Civility, Kindness, and Charity to the Party we are at Law with, and do not, upon that Account, forbear the Respect we formerly shew'd him; in this Case our coming cannot be prejudicial to worthy receiving; for as it is impossible but Contests and Disputes will arise, and the Law of Nature requires; that Justice should be done to every Man, it must necessarily follow, that there must be Courts of Judicature, and that God not only permits, but appoints them too. It's certain, that God, in the Jewish *Theocracy*, ordain'd such Courts; and human Societies not being able to subsist without them, natural Equity requires there should be such Things in all civiliz'd Nations, whereby Contests may be decided, Controversies ended, Differences superseded, and every Man come to his Right; and tho' St. Paul, 1 Cor. 6. 1, 2, &c. finds Fault with the *Corinthians* for going to Law, yet the Reason why he blames them, is partly because they quarrell'd about smaller Matters, partly because in their Law-Suits they forgot the Law of Charity, and partly because they did all this before Infidels and Idolaters, and would not refer their Disputes to indifferent Men

Men that were Christians, but impleaded one another before Judges that were Pagans, whereby the Gospel was reproach'd, Religion blasphem'd, and Christianity traduc'd; and Strangers were induc'd to believe, that the Gospel gave Men no better Principles, than either *Judaism* or *Heathenism*, nor rais'd them to higher Virtues, than what Nature and Custom had taught others that were not of that Religion: Nay, it's evident from the whole Discourse, that he allows their going to Law *before the Saints*, as it is said *v. 1. i. e.* before *Christians*, only that was too mild a Course, they thought; that was not the Way to triumph over the Adversary, or to have him punish'd, and be made a publick Example; and this ill Nature St. Paul reproves, and justly forbids, and commands them, rather than do so, to suffer themselves to be defrauded, and to take Wrong, *v. 7. Christ*, indeed, *Matth. 5. 40.* in that Saying, *If any Man will sue thee at the Law, and take away thy Coat, let him have thy Cloak also*, seems to condemn all going to Law; but the very Expressions he uses, shews that he restrains the Unlawfulness of it to certain Cases; *i. e.* if the Matter be small, inconsiderable, and of no great Moment, such as a Coat or a Cloak, and other Things of the same Nature; and indeed it is a very lamentable Case, to see how many of our People sue their Neighbours for pitiful Debts, and cast them into Prison; for Proof of which, a Man need go no farther than the *Marshalsea*, a Thing not to be thought of without Horror. Besides, Christ, in the foregoing *Verses* of that *Chapter*, enters into a Discourse against recompensing Evil for Evil; and to extirpate that devilish Temper of Revenge, would have us deny our selves to a very high Degree, rather than think of rewarding Evil with Evil; and to this Purpose, instances in another Man's going to Law with us out of Spleen and Malice, in which he would not have his Disciples follow or imitate such Men, but rather than return the like Injury, suffer and bear with their unjust Acts, leaving Vengeance to him who hath said, *I will repay*; so  
that

that Christ doth not absolutely condemn going to Law, but only in these two Cases. 1. If the Concern be small, and of no great Moment or Consequence: And, 2. If we cannot go to Law without Animosities, Grudges, and revengeful Thoughts and Desires against our Neighbours. And hence it was, as a Learned Man <sup>Dr. Hammond.</sup> of our Church observes, upon *James ii. 2.* that the Christians, even under the Heathen Emperors, very early erected Courts of Judicature among themselves, in which Causes were decided, and Differences about *Meum* and *Tuum* determin'd: And though the Assemblies spoken of in *St James*, are usually interpreted of Religious Assemblies, yet he very judiciously shews, that it is more probable that they were Assemblies upon the Account of hearing and deciding Causes betwixt Man and Man, because Judges are expressly mention'd, *verse 4.* And these Judges had Seats or Benches elevated, and higher than the Pavement, on which they sat; and had their Foot-stools also, under which the Poor were order'd to sit, *verse 3.* From whence we may guess what kind of Partiality they us'd; the poor Plaintiffs or Defendants, were order'd to sit in the lowest Seats; the richer were permitted to sit with the Judges, or the more honourable Men; which argu'd too great a Respect of Persons, and was contrary to the *Jewish* Rule, and indeed, against the Law of Nations, which condemn'd all Partiality in Judgment, and gave the Poor as free Admittance to the Bar, as the Rich, and requir'd equal Consideration of both States and Conditions; all which not being easily applicable to Assemblies where the Word was preach'd, and the Sacraments administer'd, 'tis in a manner necessary, that we apply it to Courts of Justice, where Civil Affairs and Matters were debated: And if so, going to Law, could not be absolutely unlawful; and consequently, the Rules and Conditions above-mention'd being observ'd, coming to this Table during the Contest, and while the Law-suit is depending, cannot make a Man an unworthy Receiver.



9. *Knowing that other Men are not in Charity with him, doth not make a Person an unworthy Receiver.* This I have known to be the Fear of otherwise well-minded Christians; while their Relations, Friends, and Acquaintance have been angry with them, and averse from being reconcil'd to them, they have forbore to receive, for fear they should eat and drink unworthily. But,

1. If it be indeed through our own Fault, that others will not be Friends with us; if we have given the Offence, and will not humble our selves to the offended Party, nor acknowledge our Faults, nor make them Restitution, or Satisfaction, or Reparation for the Injury; and if thereupon, he that is offended, will entertain no charitable Thoughts of us, there the Case is plain, that if we come to eat and drink at this holy Table, we come with unrepented Sins upon our Backs, because we receive living in the Omission of a known Duty. He that might quench a dangerous Fire, and will not, is guilty of all the Mischief that ensues upon it: And he that can shut the Sluce, whereby to prevent the Inundation of his Neighbour's Garden, and wilfully forbears to do it, hath a Hand in all the Hurt and Damage that his Neighbour's Ground receives. As in the Law, *Exod. xxi. 29.* if the Owner of the Beast knew that his Ox did use to push with his Horns, and did not keep him in, he was charg'd with the Man's Death that follow'd upon it; so he that hath given just Occasion to others to be displeas'd with him, and will apply no Remedy to heal the Breach, doth not only sin, but makes himself accessory to the Uncharitableness of his Neighbour, and becomes Partner with him in his Sin, and such a Person is a very unfit Guest at his Master's Table. But,

2. If other Men hate us without a just Cause, and we have given them no Occasion of ill Will or Displeasure against us; or, having offended them by Words or Actions, if we have try'd all rational and prudential Means to regain their Friendship, and to recover

their

their Charity, and after all this, they will not be reconcil'd, there their Sin and Obstinacy must not, cannot hinder us from our Duty. Indeed, if they that are stiff, and will hearken to no Terms of Peace, come to this Table, they sin with a Witness; but their causeless Hatred cannot have the same Effect in us, it being not with their Sins, as it is with Envy whose poisonous Steams will infect those that look upon them; but the Arrows they shoot, light upon their own Heads. If it were not so, all the Apostles must have been unworthy Receivers, for all the World clamour'd against them; they were hated by Heathens, hated by the Jews, revil'd by Strangers, reproach'd by their Country-men; and there was greater Hopes to reconcile Fire and Water, Light and Darknes, than of reconciling some People in the World to them. Yet did not this Hatred and Surliness of others, make them unworthy Communicants. If my Neighbour will throw himself down from a Precipice, why should that hinder me from walking in a plain Path? And if others will be wicked, why should that be an Impediment of my being good? 'Tis true, Christ, *Matth. v. 23, 24.* tells us, *If thou bring thy Gift to the Altar, and there remember that thy Brother hath ought against thee, leave there thy Gift before the Altar, and go thy way, first be reconcil'd to thy Brother, and then come and offer thy Gift.* Which Words seem to import, that if another Man be not in Charity with us, our Devotion cannot be accepted, 'till he be reconcil'd to us. But these Words of Christ must be explain'd by *ver. 22.* which brings in the Discourse, *ver. 23.* for there our Saviour tells us, *I say unto you, that whosoever is angry with his Brother without a Cause, shall be in Danger of the Judgment, i. e.* He that conceives Anger against his Neighbour, and hopes to escape the Guilt of Sin, must have a very just Cause for it, viz. there must be a just Cause given him by his Neighbour; and then it follows, *If thy Brother have ought against thee, i. e.* have ought against thee justly, which thou hast

given just Occasion for, *first be reconcil'd to thy Brother, and then offer thy Gift.* So that it is not another Man's bare having ought against us, that makes us unworthy Receivers; but if he have ought against us, that we have been the just Cause of; if we have kindled his Anger by something that we have injuriously said or done against him; there, till we seek to be reconcil'd unto him, our Gifts, and what we offer to God, must needs be odious to him, because they are offer'd with an Heart that is not right with him: But where we have either done nothing that he can take just Exception against, or have done our Duty, and what became our Place and Station, without any Intent of doing him Harm; or, if in case of an Offence given, we have, by proper Means and Addresses, sought to be at Peace with him, and notwithstanding all this, he will still have ought against us; there his Hatred, and the whole Guilt of it, will fall upon his own Pate; nor can his Insolence or ill Nature, darken the Light of God's Love and Favour to us, who sees we have done what became Christians, and honest Men; and tho' it will not satisfy the angry Man, yet his Choler cannot deprive us of the kind Looks of our Father which sees in secret, nor make us unworthy Receivers.

10. *A Man's having, as he supposes, receiv'd no Benefit by this Holy Sacrament, and coming to it again, doth not necessarily make him an unworthy Receiver.* For,

1. A Man may really be the better for having been at this Sacrament, and yet, for the present, may not be sensible of it, because he may measure his not being better, by the want of some particular Qualifications he is desirous of, and over-look those Advantages he hath in good Truth receiv'd by the Holy Communion. Many a pious Christian is the better for this Sacrament, tho' he is loth to believe it; for his coming to this Table either strengthens him in his Hatred of Sin, and in his Love to Religion; or advances him in Humility, Patience, Readiness to forgive Injuries, and in Charity; and



and yet, because he feels not just after those lively Desires, those earnest Breathings after God, that Fervour of Spirit, that Ardency in Prayer he expected, he may think he receives no Benefit, because he doth not get what at present he most desires, and feels not those Excellencies and Accomplishments which are most upon his Mind; yet all this While there may be an actual Growth of Goodness in him, his other Graces may be establish'd, his Cautiousness of offending a merciful Redeemer increas'd, his Obedience and Self-denial advanc'd, his Faith of another Life augmented, his Resolutions to shun the very Appearances of Evil, fortify'd; all which, upon a strict Search and View of his inward Man, he may find: And therefore I may justly conclude, that if he receives the Benefit God thinks fit for him, tho' he receive not the Benefit he desires, that that Supposition of his, of receiving none at all, cannot make him an unworthy Receiver.

2. 'Tis possible we may receive no Benefit at all by frequenting this Ordinance; and we may know we do not, if we are the same in our Lives we were before. If the Cross of Christ doth not draw us after him; if it leaves us without Desires to be like him, or doth not check the Sins we have been fond of; if it does not make us stand in Awe of God any more than we did before; if it work no Love to God, no Charity to other Mens Souls and Bodies in our Hearts; if after it, we rush into Sin as eagerly as before; if it prove no Bridle to our sinful Appetite, no Curb to our covetous Desires; if it restrains us not in our Affections to the World; if it give us no Courage to resist, no Boldness to withstand those Lusts which were dear to us; (but still this is clearly our own Fault, and, for want of considering the Arguments and Motives, the Cross of Christ affords us to die to Sin, for want of thinking on the Designs of Christ's Death, and for want of taking Pains with our selves, for want of reflecting on the Force of divine Love, and for want of earnest Prayers and Addresses for the powerful Assistance

Assistance of God's Spirit :) If it be thus with us, we have Reason to be afraid God will not rejoyce over us, when he comes to view our Souls in this Ordinance. However, all this need not be an Obstacle to our Reformation: If we have done ill, 'tis our Interest to awake out of Sleep, and to redeem the Time: If we have receiv'd no Benefit before, upon our Amendment, we may: If we have done the Work of the Lord negligently, upon our Reformation, God may turn our Captivity, *as the Streams in the South*. It is with this Sacrament as it is with a rich Mine, which yields no Profit to the Owner, 'till he works it. The Benefit Men receive here, is the Effect of Labour: They must be dispos'd and qualify'd for this Gift, and that which qualifies them, is, to quit that Slothfulness they were guilty of.

II. *Communicating with Persons that receive unworthily, doth not necessarily make a Person an unworthy Receiver.* For,

1. *Every Man shall bear his own Burthen*, Gal. 6: 5. If another be wicked, how can his Wickedness unsettle my Faith, or disorder my Devotion, except I consent to his Impiety, or suffer my self to be entic'd by it? Every Man's Sin is a personal Thing, (except in Case of Scandal) and the Offender only shall feel the Smart of it: He that is free from the other's Offence, shall be freed also from the Penalty due to the Offence; and then what Hurt do I receive by an ill Man's communicating in my Company? I may eat with a leprous, with a diseas'd, with a gouty Man, at a common Table, and yet not participate of his Distemper; and why should I share in his Guilt at the Lord's Table, when I both abhor it, and keep my self from the Infection? *The Soul that sins, shall die*, is God's standing Rule, *Ezekiel 18. 20*, *The Son shall not bear the Iniquity of the Father, neither shall the Father bear the*

*Iniquity* of the Son. *and for* *want of earnest Prayers and Addresses for the powerful Assistance*

*Iniquity of the Son; the Righteousness of the Righteous shall be upon him, and the Wickedness of the Wicked shall be upon him. If therefore I approach with a practical Faith, and another with Unbelief, or, which is all one, with a Faith without Works, shall his Unbelief make the Faith of God of no Effect? Rom. iii. 3.*

2. What Hurt did the Guests receive at the Wedding-Feast, *Matth. xxii. 11, 12.* by eating with the Man who had no Wedding-Garment? Were they rejected by the Master of the Feast, because they feasted in his Company? No; all that came adorn'd with a suitable Temper, and in whose Spirit there was no Guile, receiv'd the Caresses of the King; and none but the profane Wretch felt the Thunder of the Prince's Anger; of him alone 'tis said, *Bind him Hand and Foot, and take him away, and cast him into outer Darkneſs, there shall be weeping and gnashing of Teeth.* As he was singular in his Sin, so he was singular in his Punishment: His coming unprepar'd did not divest others of their Garments, nor did his Misery reach those that sat down with him: Their own Faith sav'd them, while the other's Infidelity condemn'd him: The Master doth not so much as frown upon the rest, doth not so much as give them an angry Word; nor doth he expostulate with them, why they would bear him Company: They charitably believ'd he was a good Man, because he was invited with them; and their Charity made their own Sacrifice acceptable, while the other's was Abomination to the Lord.

3. If I see another Man, whom I know to be, or to have been a notorious Sinner, kneel down by me at this holy Table, he must not therefore be an Object of my Scorn, but of my Pity and Compassion. I can make an excellent Use of seeing him in my Company; for I can pray for him, and beg of God that he would over-awe his Spirit with a Sense of the Death of Christ, and strike him into Repentance and Humiliation. I can intreat my heavenly Father to give him a Sight



of the Errors of his Ways, and Resolutions never to profane that Cross again, on which the great Redeemer of the World suffer'd. I can pray that his Sight of the bleeding *Jesus* may work upon his Soul, and fill his Heart with holy Compunctions, and his Eyes with Tears. I can pray that, after this Communion, he may take heed, and sin no more; that the Solemnity may leave such a Fear upon his Spirit, that he may dread to offend God, more than putting his Hand in the Fire. And where I do so, I do at once exercise my Pity, and raise mine own Devotion; I imitate Christ on the Cross, praying for his Murtherers, and, with him, become a Solicitor for those that have derided and spit upon him. And this, sure, cannot make me an unworthy Receiver.

4. Who hath given me a Key to other Men's Hearts, whereby I can judge, at the Receiving of the *Eucharist*, that my Neighbour receives unworthily? How do I know, but that he who was vicious a Week ago, may become a Penitent that Day? Or who assures me, that he who cast God's Laws behind him Yesterday, may not this Day cry out, *O wretched Man that I am!* Who bids me trouble my Head about another's Receiving, when I have enough to do with mine own Heart? And while I give my self Liberty to judge another, is it not a very great Sign that I am not very sensible of mine own Vileness? If I am truly concern'd about mine own spiritual Welfare, I shall not be at Leisure to dive into other Men's Lives and Consciences. My own Sins will be Burthen enough to me, that I shall not need to concern my self about another's Business. If I give my self to Censoriousness at such Times, I lose my Charity and Humility: And if the Rule be, *to esteem others better than our selves*, I do not very heartily obey that Precept, while I suffer my Mind to dwell upon other Mens Faults and Errors. Christianity bids me to have humble Thoughts of my self; and  
if

if I think, that all that receive with me, may be, for ought I know, better than my self, I assuredly prepare for God's Favour, who ever gives Grace to the Humble.

5. If *Judas*, the Traytor, was present at this Sacrament, as well as the other Apostles, and his being present, did not make the rest unworthy Receivers, why should I think that a wicked Man's coming with me to this Table should make me one? That *Judas* was present at this Sacrament, we have the concurrent Testimony of three *Evangelists*; for they all confess that *Jesus* sat down with the Twelve, to the eating of the Passover; and while they were eating, *Jesus* administer'd the holy Sacrament to them: So *St. Matth.* xvi. 26. *As they were eating, Jesus took Bread, and bless'd it, and brake it, and gave it to the Disciples, and said, Take, eat, this is my Body.* So *St. Mark* xiv. 22. *And as they did eat, Jesus took Bread, and bless'd it, and brake it, and gave to them, and said, Take, eat, this is my Body.* Nay, *St. Luke* is more expresse, xxii. 19, 20, 21. *And he took Bread, and gave Thanks, and brake it, and gave unto them, saying, This is my Body, &c. But, behold! the Hand of him which betrays me, is with me on the Table, &c.* *St. John*, indeed, tells us, that *Judas* having receiv'd the Sop, in the Passover, he went immediately out, *John* xiii. 30. But since the Evangelist mentions nothing of the Sacrament, his Silence about *Judas's* being present at the Sacrament, can be no Argument; and his Words may justly be constru'd thus, *Having receiv'd the Sop in the Passover, and stay'd till the Sacrament was administer'd to him and the rest of the Disciples, he immediately went out.* For the Sacrament being administer'd by Christ, while they were eating the Passover, by the Sop *St. John* must needs be suppos'd to understand, both the Passover, and that which was, without Delay, subjoyn'd to it, i.e. the Sacrament. And whereas it is objected, That the Sacrament could not have been conveniently administer'd, if the Traytor had been present; that is a Supposition

which contradicts the Matter of Fact recorded by the Evangelists: And who can judge so well of the Convenience and Inconvenience of Things, as Christ himself? If Christ thought it convenient to give it him, who shall say, it was not so? Nor could the Disciples be much surpriz'd at it, when they had so often heard their Master say, that *the Tares and Wheat must grow together until the Harvest*; and that the *Kingdom of Heaven, or the Church Militant, was like a Net, containing good Fish and bad*. And tho' the Words Christ us'd in this Sacrament, *This is my Body, which is given for you*; and *This is the New Testament in my Blood, which is shed for you, for the Remission of Sins*, cannot be directly apply'd to Judas; yet, since these Blessings are promis'd conditionally in other Places of Scripture, they might belong to Judas conditionally, in case he repented, or brought forth Fruits meet for Repentance; as they belong'd to the other Disciples absolutely, because their Hearts were sincere and without Hypocrisy. Nor is it strange, that Christ should say, in the Presence of Judas, *I will not drink henceforth of the Fruit of the Vine, until the Day when I drink it New with you in my Father's Kingdom*: For there is nothing more common in the Writings of the Apostles, when they address themselves to a whole Church, than to apply to them in general the Promises of the Gospel, tho' true Believers only have a Right in them. *We remember, without ceasing, your work of Faith, and Labour of Love, and Patience of Hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, in the Sight of God and our Father: Knowing, Brethren, Belov'd, your Election of God; and ye became Followers of us, and of the Lord, &c.* saith St. Paul, to the whole Church of the Thessalonians, *1 Thes. 1. 3, 4, 6*. In which we may suppose there were divers Hypocrites, to whom these Elogies could not properly belong: And therefore, when Christ spake these Words to the Disciples, Judas being present, it was enough that they belong'd to the major Part of them; and those that were qualify'd for that Mercy, might appropriate



it to themselves. It is confess'd that Christ, *Math.* vii. 6. saith, *Give not that which is holy unto Dogs*. But it is evident from the Connexion of the Words, that that Saying is to be understood of Reproof, or fraternal Correction, which is to be superseded where Men are incorrigible, and Mockers of Religion; and after several Admonitions, instead of being better, become worse, and scorn the Truth of the Gospel; a Precept of the same Import with that of Solomon, *Prov. ix. 8. Reprove not a Scornor, lest he hate thee*. If it were to be understood of publick Ordinances, it might be apply'd to the preaching of the Word, as well as to the Sacrament; and it would follow, that wicked Men were to be banish'd from the one, as well as the other; which is absurd, and contrary to the Practice of the holy Apostles. And what if Christ calls *Judas a Devil*? *John vi. 70. Devils*, 'tis true, are incapable of receiving this Sacrament; yet we must not think that he calls him so upon any other Account, but his Hellish Qualities: For which Reason he says of all other wicked Men, that they are of their Father the Devil, *John viii. 44*. Nay, in his Reproof to *Peter*, who was against his Suffering, he calls him *Satan* or *Devil*; because to be against his Suffering, was to join with the Devil, who, of all Things, dreaded that Death, as the Ruin of his Empire. So that *Judas* was still a Man, though a wicked Man; yet not so wicked, but that he was still capable of Repentance; and in giving him this Sacrament, he declar'd him so: And tho' he receiv'd nothing but the external Elements, yet, in being admitted to the external Symbols, he had an *Item* given him, that if he had come with unfeign'd Faith and Repentance, he should have receiv'd the Promise too. And that Christ offer'd him these Symbols, was to tell his Followers how it would be with their Congregations in Time to come; and how Wolves, as well as Sheep, would present themselves at this Table. But it is usually pleaded, that if it be granted that *Judas* was present at this Sacrament, yet still he had a good Out-side, he

was far from being a scandalous Sinner ; so that the Congregation could not be offended. But this Argument is of no Weight at all ; for, whether he were a scandalous Sinner or no, as long as Christ had declar'd him a Devil, and a Traytor, it was as much as if he had been a scandalous Sinner ; and the Disciples might be as confident of it, as if they had seen him run into Excess of Riot. So that *Judas* being present at the Sacrament, and his Presence not interfering with the worthy receiving of the other Disciples, it follows, that another Man receiving unworthily, cannot make us, that come with suitable Virtues, unworthy Receivers. And yet, after all this, I would not be understood, as if scandalous Sinners were not to be separated from this holy Table, by those whose Office it is to forbid and hinder them : For, tho' Christ suffer'd *Judas* to be present, thereby prophetically to foretel, how, in future Ages, notwithstanding all the Care that shall be taken, Hypocrites and Sinners would mingle with the Good and Sincere in this Sacrament ; yet this contradicts not the Commission he gave to the Apostle, *to do all Things decently, and in Order* ; of which orderly Part, this is one great Rule, *1 Cor. v. 11. If any Man that is call'd a Brother, be a Fornicator, or Covetous, or an Idolater, or a Railer, or a Drunkard, or an Extortioner, with such a one, no not to eat.* 'Tis confess'd, that this is to be understood of common Meals : However, the Consequence is very easy ; if we are not to eat with such at common Tables, we are to forbear eating with them at the Lord's Table : But then 'tis fit withal, that the Church should excommunicate such Persons first that there may be a Mark set upon them, whereby we may know them to be so, and avoid their Company. If the Church, either by Reason of the Multitude of such Sinners, or for want of sufficient Information, cannot, or thro' Neglect, doth not ; a private Christian is not therefore to be scandaliz'd at such Persons when they come to the Sacrament, nor think himself therefore an unworthy Communicant, because such are present ; there being

being no publick Mark set upon them, whereby he is authoriz'd not to eat with them. The Church, indeed, doth as good as formerly excommunicate all such, when in her Admonition or Exhortation before the Sacrament, she declares, *Therefore if any of you be a Blasphemer of God, a Hinderer or Slanderer of his Word, an Adulterer, or be in Malice, or Envy, or any other grievous Crime, repent you of your Sins, or else come not to this holy Table, lest, after the Taking of this holy Sacrament, the Devil enter into you, as he entred into Judas, and fill you full of all Iniquities, and bring you to Destruction both of Body and Soul.* But though this be a kind of general Excommunication, yet, except the particular Persons be taken Notice of, and branded by the Church, a private Christian must judge charitably of those that come; and if he do so, their Impiety cannot hinder him from being a worthy Partaker of the Sacrament. I have been the longer upon this Point, because I have known it to be a great Scruple, that hath hinder'd many from coming to the Lord's Table, being possess'd with Fear, that if they should meet with such Persons there, they should eat and drink unworthily.

12. *Eating and Drinking at this Table, with some Scruples upon the Mind, doth not necessarily make a Man an unworthy Receiver.* By a scrupulous Conscience, I do not mean an erroneous, nor a doubtful Conscience the former being, when a Person thinks that his Duty, which is directly against the Word and Will of God, as it was with the Jews, *John xvi. 2.* The other, when a Person doubts, whether such and such Actions be lawful or unlawful, as it was with those Christians, *Rom. xiv. 23.* But a scrupulous Conscience proceeds from Fear, and Fear caus'd by slight and weak Arguments, whereby a Person is satisfy'd, that such a Thing or Action is his Duty, but Melancholy, or the Devil, or Converse with scrupulous Persons, inject some Thoughts, which makes a Person fluctuate, or waver in his Performance: For Example, a Man, conscious of his own Wants, knows, that



coming to the Lord's Table is his Duty, and accordingly he comes, yet comes with Fears in his Mind; Fears caus'd either by what he hath read, or by what he hath heard, or by what he hath seen in others; Fears that suggest to him, that he should not have come, because he hath not every Thing that he observes in other good Christians. Now, I say, that eating and drinking with such Scruples upon his Mind, doth not make him an unworthy Receiver.

1. Because, notwithstanding these Scruples, he may be sincere in his Faith and Love, he may sincerely desire, and be sincerely willing to keep himself unspotted from the World, and to embrace the *Wisdom which is from above, first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated.* He may, for all this, deliberately chuse Holiness as the better Part, and his Faith may be carry'd out to embrace Christ, as his Mediator and Governor; and he may actuate his Love so, that he shall be afraid of the Appearances of Evil; and if it be thus with him, notwithstanding his little Scruple, he may be, and will certainly be, a welcome Guest at this holy Table; for God judges of us by the Sincerity of our Hearts, not by every little accidental Fear that may surprize us, and is apt to discompose a timorous Mind. And therefore,

2. Such Scruples may be lawfully rejected, oppos'd, and banish'd out of our Minds, without Danger: Nay, they ought to be resisted; and a Christian, in this Case, is oblig'd not to harbour them, and to be resolute in stopping his Ears against them, especially where he finds so good a Foundation in himself, as I mention'd in the foregoing Paragraph. To give Regard to them, is the Way to multiply them; and to ruminate upon them, is to let in, or to open the Door to greater Perplexities. Nor is this to act against Conscience; but according to the true Rules of Conscience, for a Scruple is a needless Fear, and without just Ground, which Fear can bring no Obligation upon the Party thus assaulted:

And

And it is observ'd by Experience, where Persons use a kind of Violence to expel such Scruples, they strengthen their Faith and their Conscience, fit themselves for greater Duties, and become more expedient in their Journey to the City of the living God.

13. *Want of great Knowledge doth not make a Man an unworthy Receiver.* It's confess'd, that some Knowledge is necessary in order to a worthy Receiving, for *this is Eternal Life, that they know thee the only true God, and him, whom thou hast sent, Jesus Christ, John 17. 3.* But the Knowledge requisite, lies within a small Compass; and he that knows no more than the *six Fundamental Principles* laid down by St. Paul, Heb. 6. 1, 2; knows enough, in order to a comfortable Communion. Those Principles are, 1. *Repentance from dead Works*, That Repentance from our known Sins, is absolutely necessary. 2. *Faith towards God*, That God must be believ'd, according to the Revelations he hath vouchsafed to Mankind in his Word, and that the Things contain'd in that Book, are infallibly true. 3. *The Doctrine of Baptism*, That we are baptis'd in the Name of God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and thereby have given our selves up to his Service. 4. *Laying on of Hands*, That the Holy Ghost, whereof that laying on of Hands, in Confirmation, is an external Sign, is certainly dispens'd and bestow'd in some Measure on all those that are baptis'd, whereby they are enabl'd to fight against Sin, the World, the Flesh and the Devil. 5. *Resurrection of the Dead*, That there shall be a Resurrection of our Bodies, wherein they shall be re-united to their Souls, and appear before God's dreadful Tribunal, to give an Account of their Lives and Actions. 6. *Eternal Judgments*, That in the last Day, the Controversy of Mens Happiness or Unhappiness shall be decided, and Men shall be either sent into Eternal Life, or into Eternal Fire. He that knows these *Six Principles*, and believes them, and is resolv'd to act accordingly, hath Knowledge enough to fit him for a worthy Participation of this Ordinance;  
for

for these are sufficient Motives to remember the Death of the Son of God, with holy Resolutions to follow him, that we may be Partakers of his everlasting Bliss. But that a Man must needs be a competent Scholar, and understand the whole Mystery of Godliness, and be able to give an Account of the nicer Points of Divinity, and to answer the harder Questions about the Manner and Nature of those Things which God hath reveal'd; this is not necessary: Ignorance of the obstruser Problems of Theology, doth not make a Man an unworthy Receiver. For,

1. So much Knowledge is only necessary, as serves to make us Practical Christians, and a small Stock of Knowledge will do that; and he that knows that Mankind was lost by *Adam's* Fall, and stands in need of a Saviour, to reconcile them to God; and that Christ Jesus, the Son of God, who being in the Form of God, assum'd our Nature, and dy'd for us, is that Saviour who is both able and willing to reconcile us to an offended God, upon the reasonable Terms of turning from a sensual and sinful Life, and making his Life and Precepts the Rule of our Conversation, whereupon we shall be pardon'd, and obtain eternal Life: He that knows these few Particulars, (and how easily are they learn'd and imbib'd?) knows enough to make him a practical Christian, if he will but act according to these Principles, and this unfeign'd Willingness makes him a worthy Receiver; for this Sacrament, as hath been often hinted in the Premises, is to increase our Practice, to augment our Love to Holiness, to strengthen our Resolutions to follow Christ, to cleanse us from that Filthiness which naturally besets us, and to enlarge our Graces; and since that Knowledge, I have mention'd, is a sufficient Preparative for all this, it must be a sufficient Preparative for the holy Sacrament.

2. Much Knowledge very often hinders Men from the Practical Part of Religion. It need not do it, and it



it ought not to do it, but we see it frequently doth : For Men are apt to be taken with fine Notions ; and while their Delight runs all that Way, they forget too often to delight greatly in God's Commandments. This is too evident in many Men, who are great Scholars ; who satisfy themselves with this, that they know more than the Vulgar, and neglect those severer Parts of Practical Religion, which many of the Vulgar do conscientiously observe ; and many an ordinary Man that knows little more than his Creed, but makes that Creed an *Enforcive* to Obedience, is in a happier Condition than the greater *Literati*, who trouble their Heads so much about Controversies and Criticisms, that they bestow little Time upon Mortification. In the Primitive Ages, when Men knew not much, they practis'd more ; as, since Knowledge hath increas'd, Mens Practices have much degenerated from the Simplicity of the Gospel : Not that I commend Ignorance in the Laity, as they do in the Church of *Rome* ; but, I think, a little Knowledge improv'd into a great Severity of Life, is safer, and more beneficial, than great Skill in Divinity, without suitable Fruits of Righteousness. So that upon a Review of the whole, I may safely conclude, that Want of great Knowledge, doth not make a Man an unworthy Receiver.

III. From what we have said, it will be easy to guess in the next Place, *what it is to eat and drink Unworthily* : For from Negatives Affirmatives, may be inferr'd, without any great Difficulty ; and tho', after this Discourse, I might spare my Pains in setting down the Particulars, yet, to assist the Weak, and to conform my self to the meanest Capacity ; I shall explain the Nature of this unworthy eating and drinking in the following Observations.

I. To eat and drink unworthily, is to eat and drink by Force. By eating and drinking by Force, I mean coming to this Sacrament, either because the Law of the Land

Land commands it; or because our Superiors, under whose Command we are, or from whom we expect some Gain and Benefit; or, in case of Neglect of their Orders, apprehend some Danger or Injury to our temporal Concerns, will not be satisfy'd without it: Not but that a Servant, or whoever is under the Command of others, ought to give Heed to the Pious Counsel and Advice of those that are above him, take it into Consideration, and make Advantage of that Opportunity, to apply himself to the serious Practice of it, and thereupon consult with Divines, and with his own Conscience, how to make his Calling and Election sure; but where a Person is altogether passive in the Thing, regards more what his Superiors say, than what his Conscience feels, and comes more to please those which are above him, than to discharge his Duty, where his chief Motive is to give Content to those, whose Favour he is loth to lose, and where he would certainly neglect coming, were it not for the Danger of prejudicing what is very dear to him in the World; there, I say, he *eats and drinks unworthily*: For,

1. Such a Person stands more in awe of Man than of God. God's Command cannot make him do that which human Injunctions can. Dust and Ashes prevail more with him, than the holy one of Israel. Man's Anger and Displeasure moves and affects him more than the Indignation of a jealous God; and with what Eyes can the Almighty look upon that Wretch, whom he sees more concern'd to please a *poor Grasshopper*, (so Man is call'd, *Es. 4. 22.*) than him *that sits upon the Circle of the Earth*? How can he but set his Face against that Communicant, whose slavish Temper he spies at his Table; whose Heart sticks close to the Earth, and makes no great Account of him, who daily courts him by his Favours? How can he but frown upon that Creature, whom no Charms of an Almighty Love can melt, and the threatening of Man can affright into any Thing? *Who*

art thou that thou should'st be afraid of a Man that shall die, and of the Son of Man, that shall be made as Grass? And forgett'st the Lord thy Maker, that hath stretch'd forth the Heavens, and laid the Foundations of the Earth? saith God, Isa. li. 12, 13.

2. Such a Person, his outward Man only receives the Holy Sacrament. His Soul, for which this Feast is chiefly prepar'd, receives nothing. The Brute only appears at the Table, the Angel stays away. God expects the Master at this Banquet, not the Slave. The Body is not capable of this sacred Food, the Soul is the proper Guest: This is it that can expect Refreshment at this Board; and he that comes to feed his Body only, knows not yet what this Ordinance was intended for. Where a Man brings nothing but his Body to this *Love-Feast*, leaving his Soul enslav'd to the Profits of the World, or to the Will of mortal Men, he must needs receive unworthily; for God's Enemy, which is the World, engrosses that Part which should appear before God, and behold, and be ravish'd with his excellent Greatness and Goodness, and with the admirable Designs in spreading the Royal Table for him. To what Purpose is the Carcase, while that, which should animate it, is engag'd another way? Can the *Shell* please God, who hath so often declar'd, that he will be satisfy'd with nothing but the *Kernel*? And in vain doth he require the *Heart*, if the outward Frame were Sacrifice sufficient. So that what Christ saith, *John vi. 63.* may justly be apply'd here, tho' with some Variation of the Sense. *It's the Spirit that quickeneth, the flesh profits nothing.*

2. To eat and drink unworthily, is, to make this Receiving a Matter of Custom only: Where Men approach, because its fashionable, to observe the *Decorum* of their being Members of a Church, more than to grow in a Spiritual Life; and know no other Enforcive, or can give no Account of any other, but this, because it is usual for Men, who are baptized, and profess themselves Christians,



Christians, and go to the Publick to do so; there they must needs eat and drink *avariciously, undecently, or unworthily*: And this is the Case of many ignorant People, both in City and Country, who come for Company sake, and because their Neighbours use to do so; who think it not a Province belonging to them, to know, or dive into the Mysteries of Salvation, but trust to it, that God is merciful, and will save them, though they know not why or how; whose Affections are bound up with the Earth, and will be sensible of no higher Felicity, than what a good Crop and a full Purse affords. Now, that to receive with no higher Aims, or from no better Principle, is, to receive unworthily, will appear from hence:

1. Because such Persons receive, without being affected and touch'd with the Riches and Treasures open'd, reveal'd, discover'd, and offer'd in this Sacrament; Treasures greater than those the wise Men laid down at the Feet of the *Infant Saviour*; Treasures beyond all Gold, and Myrrh, and Frankincense, and all the Gums the happy *Arabia* yields; Treasures of higher Value than those the Queen of *Sheba* brought to *Solomon the Great*; Treasures richer than those the King of *Judab* shew'd to the *Babylonian* Embassadors. To shew their Excellency above all earthly Treasures, were to prove that Light is better than Darknes, and a Ball of Diamond, than a Piece of Turf; or that the Wisdom of a Minister of State, exceeds that of a sucking Babe: For, if it be true, as without Doubt it is, that God was crucify'd, or that he, who was God, humbled himself to an ignominious Death for our Sakes, and that this Love, with all its Benefits, is proclaim'd in our Ears, and tender'd to our Souls in this Sacrament, there is not a Child, but must grant, that all that this World affords, must be mere Pebbles to it. And as this Treasure of the World's Redemption, is the rich Mine discover'd in this Sacrament; so he, whom Custom and Company only brings to it, must needs receive unworthily, because he sees not, he feels not

not, he is sensible of no such Treasure; which, if he were, he would go to it as a poor Beggar, almost starv'd, goes to a rich Man's House, there to receive a vast Sum of Money, beyond his Expectation; and come wondering at the Honour that God intends him, wondering at the Favour God designs him, wondering at the Riches he shall be presented with, wondering at himself, what God should see in him, to be thus liberal and bountiful to him; wondering to see what God hath provided for him.

2. Such a Man eats and drinks, in this Sacrament, as if it were common Bread and Wine that is set before him; he approaches, and makes no more of it, than if it were a private or ordinary Table; he considers not what this Bread and Wine represent, and, as the Apostle's Phrase is, *discerns not the Lord's Body*; discerns not that the Body of him who was the Creator of Heaven and Earth, is pointed at in these Elements. 'Tis true, materially consider'd, it is the same with the Bread and Wine set upon our Tables at Home; but the Signification of it makes it Cœlestial Food, separates it from common Use, raises it above vulgar Diet, and the Stamp God sets upon it, makes it truly the *Bread of the Lord* and the *Cup of the Lord*. He whom Custom only carries to the House of God, distinguishes not the Mysteriousness and Holiness of this Food; which, if he did, he would touch it with the same Awe and Reverence that the *Woman*, troubled with a *Bloody Issue*, touch'd the Hem of *Christ's* Garment, *quaking and trembling*, Matt. v. 33.

3. To eat and drink unworthily, is, to receive without true Repentance. Where Men either do not think it requisite to leave their Sins, or pretend that they do part with them when they do not; where they mistake the present Damp that is upon their Spirits, for a Change of Life; or the melancholly and sullen Humour that hath surpris'd them, for the new Nature Religion is to give them; or forbear the external Acts of their Sins they have formerly hugg'd, and run out into, but are not resolv'd

solvd to mortify their secret Desires after them; where they mistake their Act of Preparation, for the Act of pulling down the strong Holds of Iniquity, so that their Lusts and Love to Sin remain; where they give the Devil Leave to retire a while, but are loth to take their everlasting Farewel of him; and therefore, after the *House is swept and garnish'd*, even after Receiving, open the Door to him again: Where it is so, there Men eat and drink unworthily: For,

1. Such Persons, instead of doing Honour to Christ, affront him; are still in League with that which kill'd him; pretend Sorrow for their Sins, yet secretly espouse them; give out they have sent them a Bill of Divorce, but still keep close Correspondence with them; would make God and Men believe that they are Christ's Servants, when they are still his Enemies; would perswade others that they have brought their Necks under his Yoak, when the *ἡγεμονικόν*, or that which bears Rule in their Souls, is their Carnality and Sensuality. In this Sacrament a most solemn Profession is made, and ought to be made, of our Weariness of a sinful Life; which is the Reason why the Church, in her publick Office, doth particularly address her self to such Persons as find it; and to such, that comfortable Place of *St. John* is usually apply'd; *If any Man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous*, 1 John ii. 1. that is, *If any Man sin, so as to be truly weary of it*; or if he hath sinn'd, and feels such a Remorse, that he detests himself for having done so, and thereupon bids Defiance to the Works of Darknes; *We have an Advocate* that will plead for us, prevail with God not to cast us away because we have forsaken him, and by his Merits make our Repentance valuable, that it shall prove a Propitiation for our Sins. But he that professes Weariness, yet is not tir'd with his sinful Course, not only mocks God, but gives himself the Lie; and seems to fancy, that he who dwelleth on high, sees not the secret Intrigues and Intentions of his Soul: Which is Profanation of Religion.

2. Such



2. Such a Person destroys the End for which he pretends to come to this holy Sacrament; for the End is Growth in Grace: And how shall he grow in Grace, that is unresolv'd to part from those Sins which do so easily beset him? These Things are, and cannot but be Obstacles and Impediments to that Growth: And Worms and Caterpillars are not more noxious to young Trees, than these unrepented Sins are to this Growth; and a Man may as well hope, that an Elm in his Ground, will, within a few Years, be tall enough to over-shadow his whole House, when there is nothing but Rock at the Bottom. Unrepented Sins, make the Heart mere stony Ground: Goodness may peep forth, but having no Earth, it must necessarily wither, and come to nothing. People may pull and hale a Ship with their Arms long enough, before they can make it move, while the Anchors are not taken up. Their unrepented Sins are the Anchors that keep the Soul fix'd to Earth and Hell; and to think Grace will move or advance while that Anchor holds it, is to imagin, that an House will be built without Materials; or a Field bring forth Corn, that was never sown, or never felt the Labour and Industry of the Husband-man. The End must ever be procur'd by the Means; and they only betray their Folly and Simplicity, that talk of *adding to their Faith Virtue, and to Virtue Knowledge, and to Knowledge Temperance, and to Temperance Godliness, and to Godliness Patience, that have not escap'd the Pollution of the World, thro' Lust,* 2 Pet. 1. 4, 5. This is to invert the Method of Grace, and to expect that a Tree should begin to grow at the Top before it hath a Root, or that Bread should be bak'd before the Oven be heated. These Pollutions must first be remov'd, and the Ground being clear'd of the Rubbish, you may go and superstruct the intended Edifice.

4thly, To eat and drink unworthily, *is, to eat and drink without sincere Resolutions of Obedience.* This is consequent

quent to the former Article, for Obedience is a necessary Concomitant of Repentance; and when the Repentance ends not in Obedience, the Repentance is a Cheat. A Man may, by some Reasons and Arguments, be prevail'd with to part with Sins that are of the bigger Sort, when he thinks of coming to this Sacrament; but except he at the same Time seriously resolves to obey *Christ* in every Thing he commands him, and particularly in Things which are level'd against his worldly Interest, and is heartily willing to endeavour after those Virtues which are the proper Characteristicks of his Disciples, he certainly deceives his own Soul. To shake Hands with scandalous Sins, and to think that now the Work is done, without an holy Readiness to venture on those Graces which render'd the Apostles and the primitive Believers what they were, *i. e.* amiable in the Sight of God; such as Humility, Meekness, overcoming the Evil with Good, &c. In a Word, to lop the most luxuriant Branches of the evil Tree, and not to take Care that it may bring forth good Fruit, is, to do the Work by Halves, and the Way to eat and drink unworthily. For,

1. Such Persons continue in Rebellion against God. What is Rebellion, but not to obey when we know his Will, and have all possible Opportunities to know it? If God will have me do a Thing, and I pass it by as if I heard him not; and when it is often inculcated and press'd upon me in Sermons, and my Memory refresh'd with the Duty, and yet still I look upon it as needless, or a Thing which doth not concern me; what is this but Obstinacy? And I need not tell you that *Rebellion is as the Sin of Witchcraft*, 1 Sam. 15. 22. Thus *Samuel* tells *Saul*, upon his Disobedience to the Command of God, of extirpating the *Amalekites*. 'Tis probable *Saul* had his Excuses, and thought God might not mean it in that rigid Sense that the Prophet's Words imported; or, that if he executed Part  
of

of the Order, it would be sufficient: But these are not Things that avail much with God; notwithstanding all this, the Prophet calls his Neglect, Rebellion. I know, and am sensible, that a very worthy Communicant may sometimes ignorantly neglect a Duty, and yet preserve an Interest in God's Love; because, as soon as he comes to know his Error, he doth not encourage it in himself, but reforms it. But this differs very much from Disobedience to Things peremptorily commanded, and which, every Day that we hear or read the Word, are represented to us as necessary. Here, not to resolve to do those Things, is opposing our Wills to God's Will; and tho' we do not do it openly, yet in Effect we do it; and whereas God thinks such a Virtue necessary to Salvation, we will not think it so; and notwithstanding his assuring us, that without such Accomplishments, we cannot inherit eternal Life, we fancy we may: And what is this, but crossing the Will of God? And how much does this want of Rebellion, and thinking our selves wiser than God? and surely these are not very good Qualities to dispose a Man to eat and drink worthily at his holy Table.

2. Such Persons discover their Desires to be *their own* still, their own Masters, their own Governors, and at their own Dispose, contrary to the express Assertion of the holy Ghost, That they who pretend an Interest in Christ's Blood, are *their own no more*. And the Reason is exceeding strong; For, saith he, *ye are bought with a Price*, 1 Cor. 6. 19, 20. He that redeems a Slave out of *Turkish* Captivity, redeems him with this Intent, that for the future he shall not do his own Will, but his Master's that hath ransom'd him. The same we must think of the Son of God, who, we may suppose, would never have freed us from the Devil's Yoak by a voluntary Death, to give us Leave to do what we list, but that we



might be at his Beck, and act like Persons that have, in a manner, nothing to do with our selves, but are to mind only what our Master, who bought us, would have us do. Now, he that comes to this Sacrament without sincere Resolutions to obey Christ in those commanded Virtues, which may cross, or go against his Interest, discovers his Regret at the Mystery of Redemption, dislikes Christ's redeeming him, for this End, that he might not be his own, betrays his Wishes, and could have been contented that he had redeem'd him upon softer and more favourable Terms; and, in a manner, declares and expresses his Desire, that he would be his own still, after that wonderful Price that was paid for him; which, tho' unthinking Men do take no Notice of, yet he that searcheth the inward Parts of the Belly, doth, and cannot look upon such a Person as a worthy Receiver.

5thly, To eat and drink unworthily, is, *to eat and drink without a speculative Esteem of Christ Jesus.* Where Men are not satisfy'd, or not persuaded, that his Love deserves sacrificing all to his Interest; and, in case Times of Trouble and Persecution should come, are unresolv'd to hate Father and Mother, Wife and Children, Lands and Houses, even Life it self for Christ, and with this Irresoluteness come to this Holy Sacrament; they certainly want that which must make them worthy Receivers. For,

1. He hath expressly told us, that *he that loves Father and Mother more than him, is not worthy of him*, Matth. 10. 37. And if such a Person be not worthy of him, how can he worthily receive him in the Sacrament? Not to be worthy of him, is, to have no Part in the *Inheritance incorruptible, undefil'd, and reserv'd in Heaven for his faithful Servants.* It is to have no Share in his Intercession; no Right in his Comforts; no Right to the Act of Indemnity he hath publish'd for the Benefit of those who adhere to him in all Dan-

gers; no Right to his Promises; no Right to the Privileges he communicates to those that continue with him in his Temptations; no Right to the exceeding Greatness of his Power towards them that believe. And how can Christ dwell in such a Person, that looks upon the Pelf of this World, and his outward Accommodations, as greater Things than his Favour, that is ashamed of him in a sinful and adulterous Generation; and is more taken with the Things that are seen, than with the Things which are not seen, tho' confirm'd by Divine Promises, and a thousand Miracles? So that it is evident, that he that comes not to this Sacrament with Resolutions and Desires to value him above all, cannot be a worthy Receiver.

2. Such a Person undervalues his miraculous Love, and is suppos'd to esteem it no more than the Love of a Servant, or the Love of an ordinary Friend. He doth not value it as the Love of him, in whose Power it lay to make him everlastingly miserable; he values not the unparallel'd Condescension that appears in it, the infinite Humility that shines in it, the inexpressible Grace and Favour that runs thro' the whole Frame; prefers Dross and Dung before it, contrary to the Apostle's Example, *Phil. 3. 8.* will not understand the Need he has of Christ, nor the dreadful Consequences of his Sins; nor what it is to be freed from the Power of the roaring *Lion*, and from Condemnation, from eternal Mournings and Lamentations, from being swallow'd up by the fierce Anger of the Lord: Mercies so great, and a Love so much beyond all that this World affords, that God thought the very hearing of it would make Men leap for Joy, and immediately leave all, and follow *Christ*.

6thly, *It is to eat and drink without sincere Reconciliation to our Neighbours*, who have offended or provoked us to Anger. Where either our Forgiveness is slight

and superficial, or we forbear to vent our Spleen, and Malice, and Ill-will, for a Time, with an Intent, when a fair Opportunity offers it self, to let the Party feel the Weight of our Anger; like *Joab*, who was a Great Master in the Art of Dissembling, and could connive at the Injury *Absalom* had done him, give him fair Words, fawn upon him, and introduce him to the King; but when a convenient Time came, repaid it home with a witness. Where we are either averse from Reconciliation, or make but a Shew of it, and eat and drink at this Table, we cannot be suppos'd to eat and drink worthily. For,

1. In this Case, we can have no Hope that God will be reconcil'd to us, God's Reconciliation to Man depending upon Man's reconciling himself to his Neighbour; so that where this is wanting, the other is impossible, as is evident from *Matth. 18. 35*. He that can have no just Hope of God's being reconcil'd to him, comes to this Sacrament to very little Purpose; or if he come with Hopes of his Favour, he must hope that God will prove false to his Word; which can never make him a worthy Receiver: So that his Hope can be no other than that of the Hypocrite; the Character of which we have, *Job 8. 13, 14. His Hope shall be cut off, and his Trust shall be as the Spider's Web. He shall lean upon his House, but it shall not stand; he shall hold it fast, but it shall not endure.* An ill-grounded Hope must needs be a bad Preparative for this Table, where nothing is so acceptable as Sincerity; and both the Reconciliation and the Hope of Mercy, being destitute of this Qualification, the Soul is under very ill Circumstances. *A sound Hope*, we are told, *makes not ashamed*, *Rom. 5. 5*. The Hope we speak of, cannot but cause Shame and Confusion, when God shall demand of us, how we could have the Courage to hope for his Mercy, when he hath expressly



expressly told us, that he is resolv'd to shew none, as long as we are unacquainted with it, in Offences and Trespases committed against us by our Neighbours.

2. Add to this, That a Person communicating under such Circumstances, shews he hath something that is dearer to him than God's Reconciliation, even his Lust and Ill-Nature. And what is this, but to prefer Darknes before Light, the Suggestions of the Devil before the Motions of God's Spirit, a blustering Passion before the Meekness of the Holy Jesus, Bondage before the Freedom of the Gospel, and a Blast of Honour before the soft and *still Voice* of the Holy Ghost? 'Tis true, if such Persons were ask'd whether they do so, they would have the Confidence to deny it; for Men are loth to have their Sins anatomiz'd, and drawn in their native Colours; but God still judges of us by the Tendency and complexion of our Actions, not by the soft and plausible Names we put upon them; and if our Actions speak so much, God passes his Verdict of them according to what he finds at the Bottom. Tho' we may be unwilling to speak out, yet God is not afraid to declare what he sees, and finds; and therefore, where Men will not be heartily reconcil'd, and yet venture to eat and drink at this Table, God's Judgment of us can be no other than this, that our Perverseness and ill Humour is dearer to us, than his being reconcil'd to our Souls; and surely such a Person cannot eat and drink very worthily.

7thly, *It is to eat and drink without any serious Thoughts.* Where we come to this Table with Thoughts as loose as they were in a Tavern, or Market-Place; where we take no Care to contract those Beams of our Minds, so as to unite and fix them on the Scene before us, or on something relating to it, whether it be our being created after the Image of God, and our Apostacy from that State, and the Ruin and Misery which came with that violent Stream; or the great Neces-

sity of being renew'd to that Image, and the Way that's open'd to that Renovation, by the Blood of Jesus; or the Honour and Privileges God offers us by his Son; or the Advantages we receive by being Christians, and having an Interest in the Benefits of his Passion; or the Glory of the other World, which we are made capable of, by the Death of him who was the Lord of Glory; or the holy Ambition we see in the Saints of Old, to be made Partakers of that Glory; and their Industry, and Care, and Pains, they took to attain unto it, and the Joys they found in the Remembrance of Christ's Sufferings; or the Attributes of God, his Wisdom, Holiness, Justice, Mercy, Power, Love, and Good-will to the Children of Men; all which appears in the Sacrifice offer'd for us, &c. As these Particulars are the most proper Objects of our Thoughts at such Times, so he that lets the Thoughts of his Trade, Business, and other worldly Concerns, to engross his Understanding, and go in and out at their Pleasure, doth not come with that Respect and Reverence requisite in the Participation of this Ordinance. Not but that such Thoughts may accidentally, and by the wicked Diligence of evil Spirits, that always hover about us, invade the Mind upon such Occasions: But it's one Thing to be surpriz'd with such Imaginations, contrary to our Design and Purpose, and another to give them Entertainment, without any serious Opposition of their Importunity: Not the latter, but the former, makes the Communicant an unworthy Receiver. For,

1. Hereby the Holy Spirit is excluded from taking Possession of our Souls; a Guest the Soul hath Reason to make Preparation for, and from whose Presence it may date its Fruitfulness and Happiness. Serious Thoughts invite him to our House, and are the best Attractives of that glorious Light. These are the Beds where he sows his noble Seed, and on these  
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he moves more powerfully, than he did on the Waters of the first Creation; by these we careſs Illapſes, and court his kinder Irradiations. As God's Maſteſty is deſcrib'd, *Pſal. 104. 3. That he makes the Clouds his Chariot, and walks upon the Wings of the Wind,* ſo it may be ſaid of holy Thoughts in this Sacrament, they are the Chariot and Vehicle on which the Spirit of the Holy Jeſus makes his Entrance into our Soul. Theſe diſpoſe the Soul for his gracious Communications, and put her into a Capacity of being bleſſed and enlighten'd by him. Where he ſpies theſe, he addreſſes himſelf to the Soul, in the Language of the ſpiritual Bridegroom, *Cant. 5. 1. I am come into my Garden, my Siſter, my Spouſe. I have gather'd my Myrrh with my Spice: I have eaten my Honey-comb with my Honey: I have drank my Wine with my Milk: Eat, O Friends; yea, drink abundantly, my Beloved.* Which are nothing but Rhetorical Expreſſions of the gracious Inſtances the Spirit of God is willing to confer on the Soul that makes Preparation for him, ſweeps the Houſe of the Rubbiſh of vain Imaginations, and, by pious Contemplation, makes the Chamber ready for his Entertainment: And tho' theſe Expreſſions run all in the Strain of the *Perſect Tenſe*, yet, in Holy Writ, the *Perſect* and the *Future Tenſe* are uſed promiſcuouſly; and as the *Future* many Times ſtands for the *Perſect*, ſo the *Perſect Tenſe* very often ſtands for the *Future*; and the future Bleſſings are expreſs'd by what is paſt, to aſſure us of the Certainty of them, and that the Soul hath no more Reason to doubt of them, than if it did already actually enjoy them.

2. Want of ſerious Thoughts is a kind of Profanation of this Ordinance. Profanation of holy Things, conſiſts not only in reviling and reproaching, or actual perverting them to what is ill and forbidden; but alſo in not uſing of them with that

Decency



Decency and Seriouſneſs, which ought to be the proper Concomitants of them. The *Jews* therefore, *Mal.* 1. 12, 13. are ſaid to profane the Houſe of the Lord, not becauſe they turn'd it, as their Fore-fathers, into a Den of Thieves, or Manſion of Idolatry, but becauſe they did not bring ſuitable Oblations, and thoſe they brought, were brought with an unwilling Mind; and they look'd upon the Service of God, as tedious and wearifome, and did not offer ſuch Incenſe as was pure, nor ſuch Sacrifices as were whole and ſound, and without Blemiſh. And certainly, not only he profanes God's Name, that tears it with his Oaths, and Curſes, and Blaſphemies, but he alſo, that gives it not the Honour that is due to it. Profanation of the Lord's Day, is not only to ſit drinking and revelling at Home, or to ſpend it in Play, and Sports, and Paſtimes, and Rioting, and Drunkenneſs, but not to ſanctify it by publick and private Devotion; and if ſo, not to bring holy Thoughts to this Ordinance, to the Altar of God, and to the Croſs of Chriſt, muſt be a Profanation of theſe Myſteries, as he that puts no Oil to the Lamp, extinguishes its Light, as much as he that blows it out. Holy Thoughts are part of that Honour, and Veneration we owe to this Ordinance; and as Men count it an Affront, not only to be beaten, but not to have that Reſpect given them which is due to their Rank and Quality, ſo God hath far greater Reaſon to look upon it as a Profanation of this Sacrament, where Men bring not with them Thoughts pertinent to the Majeſty and Holineſs of the wonderful Things manifeſted and repreſented here; and he that profanes this Ordinance, cannot be ſuppos'd to eat and drink worthily.

IV. But it is not enough to give an exact Deſcription of the Sin; the Danger of it is the next Thing

we must speak of: And this, St. Paul says, 1 Cor. 11. 27. is, *making our selves guilty of the Body and Blood of the Lord.* A great Guilt certainly, to be counted a Murderer of the Son of God, and to be reckon'd among *Jews* and *Infidels*, that embu'd their Hands in the Blood of the ever blessed Jesus; for so much the Apostle's Words import; and if the unworthy Receiver incurs this Guilt, he needs no other Argument to discourage him from his Sin and Impiety. The Charge is dreadful; nor must we therefore think that it is only spoke in *Terrorem*, to fright People, as we terrify Children with strange Things; not that there are such Things in Being, but to make them desist from their unlucky Enterprize or Frowardness. No, God need not make use of Bugbears, nor must we imagine that what he saith, hath the least Shadow of Untruth. As dreadful as this Charge is, he means what he says, and speaks what he thinks; and unworthy Receiving is neither more or less, than making our selves guilty of the Body and Blood of the Lord Jesus: And how this is done by him that eats and drinks unworthily, deserves Consideration.

1. He that eats and drinks unworthily, *makes himself guilty of denying, that the Body and Blood of Christ was sacrific'd for him.* As they that dishonour the Christian Religion, by their Covetousness and Unrighteousness, and lewd Practices, are said to *deny the Lord that bought them*, 2 Pet. 2. 1. because they live as if Christ had not bought them, or had not redeem'd them from Iniquity: So the *unworthy Receiver*, being loth to mortify his known and voluntary Sins, even in the Act of Receiving, denies that Christ was sacrific'd for him. His Unwillingness to reform, is a tacit Denial of the Mercy, and a Sign that he doth not believe it heartily: For the Holy Ghost supposes, that he who believes it with any Seriousness, will be affected with it, and stand

stand amaz'd at this Act of God, even at this infinite, immense, unsearchable, and incomprehensible Love: That he who needs not the Society of Men or Angels, and can be eternally happy without them, should yet have that Value and Respect for Mankind, who were his Prisoners, and had forfeited their Lives to his Justice, were the Objects of his Wrath, and had justly deserv'd to be banish'd from his gracious Presence for ever, as to find out a Remedy whereby they might be restor'd to his Favour, freed from their slavish Condition, and admitted to his Bosom, and such a Remedy as might at once assert his Justice, and declare his Mercy, and in order thereunto, freely, generously, and without Compulsion, part with the eternal Son of his Bosom, prepare a Body for him, a Body which might be capable of dying, and fall a Sacrifice at once; assert God's just Anger against Sin, and keep off the fatal Blow from Man; at once defend God's Right, and establish Man's Felicity, and thereby put the poor miserable Worm in a Capacity of becoming Heir to the Riches of God, who was an Heir of the Treasures of Wrath; and a Companion of blessed Spirits, who had deserv'd to howl with apostate Spirits; a Child of Light, who was a Son of Darkness; and a Servant of Righteousness, who was a Slave of Sin. I say, the Holy Ghost supposes, that he that seriously believes all this, will think nothing too good for God, will not stand out against so great a Mercy, will fight no more against so great and so good a Master, but will submit to him, be ready to run at his Commands; give himself up to the Will of so great a Benefactor, and will be hearty and sincere in serving him. Now, the *unworthy Receiver* being so far from doing this, so far from turning to God with all his Heart, and with all his Mind, that he refuses the Dominions of God, will be a Slave to his Sin still, and had



had rather obey the Devil, than this most bountiful Master, who hath done so much for him; by doing so, denies that Christ's Body and Blood was sacrific'd for him; for if he believ'd it, he could not do as he doth; and tho' he may protest by all that's good and sacred, that he believes it, yet Words and Compliments, will not absolve him; and if Talking were Believing, no Man that professes Christianity would ever be damn'd. What doth a Malefactor's pleading at the Bar that he is not guilty, signify, when the Evidences are strong, and the Matter of Fact is prov'd against him? Belief, that doth not touch the Heart, or renew the Mind, or spiritualize the Affections, is mere Infidelity; and where this Belief is not to be found, the Sinner is accus'd of denying the Mercy he pretends to believe; and to this Purpose, saith the Apostle, *They profess that they know God, but in their Works they deny him*, Tit. i. 16. So that the unworthy Receiver, i.e. he that receives, and yet will not reform, whatever his Profession may be, in his Actions he denies that Christ was sacrific'd for him; and therefore makes himself guilty of the Body and Blood of the Lord.

2. He eats and drinks unworthily, *makes himself guilty of jesting with the Body and Blood of Christ*, as the Fathers of the Council of *Eliberis* speak: He plays with the most tremendous Things; for in coming, he seems to confess, that by the Death of the Son of God, his miserable Soul was redeem'd, and a Pardon purchas'd for him, and the Heavens made to bow to him, and the good Will of God procur'd, to save him for ever; and yet he doth not think all this worth forsaking a sinful Lust, or shaking a pleasing *Dalilah* from his Bosom; and what is this but playing with the Body and Blood of Christ? Should a Man make a very curious Harangue in Commendation of his Neighbour, compare him

*Concil. Eliber.  
c. 3. Ne iussisse  
de communione  
Dominicæ vi-  
deantur.*

him with *Solomon* for Wisdom, with *David* for Sincerity, with *Jonathan* for Faithfulness, with *Josiah* for Piety, for Generosity with *Moses*, for Chastity with *Joseph*, for Patience with *Job*, with *St. Paul* for Courage, with *St. Peter* for Zeal, with *Absalom* for Beauty, with *Zacheus* for Charity, with *Abraham* for Hospitality, nay, with Angels for Clearness of Understanding, and for Purity of Life with *Seraphim*; and when he hath done, abuse and reproach him, or do that which he cannot but know, must be offensive and irksome, or prejudicial to him, gives the Spectator just Occasion to think, that all that flanting Panegyrick was only a jocular Thing, design'd rather as an Essay of Wit, than as any real Affection to the Virtues of the commended Party. The unworthy Receiver doth in Effect the same; for his coming to this Sacrament, is a tacit Commendation of Christ's crucify'd Body and Blood, whereby he seems to applaud the wonderful Works that Christ hath done for him, and to proclaim to all the Standers by, what an Obligation that Death is to mortify the Body of Sin, and to be true and faithful to him that did not count his Life dear to do him Good; and yet having no real Purpose within, whatever external Declaration he may make, to become a new Man; but after he hath been at this Table, when Temptations assault him, Temptations to his former Sins, yields to them as easily as ever, plainly declares he was in *jest*, when he seem'd to magnify this Munificence of his Saviour; and from hence it must follow, that he is guilty of playing with the Body and Blood of Christ.

3. He that eats and drinks unworthily, *seems to wish that Christ may die again*; and upon that Account, is guilty of the Body and Blood of the Lord; for in that Christ's Death is not efficacious to pull down the strong Holds of Sin in him, or rather, in that he will not let that Death prevail with him, to the mortifying

mortifying of his sinful Lusts, he seems to wish for an Iteration of that Death, which may be more powerful, and have a greater Influence upon the Destruction of his Sin. It is a Declaration, as it were, that the Death of Christ, as the Case stands, doth no Good upon him; and therefore, since the Death of the Son of God must be the Means to break the Power of Sin in him, he stands in need of another Death of that Saviour, which may do greater Miracles upon his Soul, or sinful Temper. Christ's Death, indeed, must break the reigning Power of Sin; but then, a Person in whom this Effect is to be wrought, must apply that Death, think upon it, warm his Heart with the Consideration of it, ruminate upon the Motives of it, and upon the Greatness of his own Sin that occasion'd it, and upon the vast Advantages that flow from that Death, and be restless with God, to make it effectual to his Soul: For, to think that this Death will do the Work without our Labour or Industry, or pondering the Weight and Moment of it, is to imagine that God will deal with us as with Brutes that have no Understanding. As Christ dy'd once in the End of the World, so his Death spreads his Virtue to all Penitents, from the Beginning to the End of the World. But where-ever it works a serious Reformation, it must be improv'd by Faith, and Thoughts, and Prayer, and Contemplation; and should Christ die a thousand times, if these Means be neglected, his dying so often, would signify little to the inconsiderate Spectator. This is the monstrous Fancy of some Men, that they hope the Mysteries of Religion will, or must, change their Hearts, without any Trouble of their own; which Conceit must needs make them contemptible in the Sight of an all-wise God, who sees them neglect the Powers and Faculties he hath given them. The unworthy Receiver, therefore, finding no Good by this Death of the Lord Jesus, for it makes no Al-

iteration



teration in his Life for the better, looks, as it were, for a new Sacrifice for Sin; and since he will not be purg'd from his known Sins, by the Blood of Jesus, which hath been already spilt, if he hath any Hopes of being purify'd from his Sin, in order to the obtaining of eternal Happiness, seems to desire a more effectual Death of that Great Mediator, which may, against his Will, drag him away from his sinful Courses, and thereby would have Christ suffer and be kill'd again, and consequently make himself guilty of the Body and Blood of the Lord.

4. He that eats and drinks unworthily, *kills the Lord Jesus*. You will say, this is impossible, *Christ* being in Heaven, and incapable of any such Act of Violence. No more could *Saul*, if you understand it according to the Letter, *persecute him*, after he was glorify'd; yet the Voice that came to him, in his Way to *Damascus*, said, *Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?* Acts 9. 4. The same may be said of an unworthy Receiver; he cannot, strictly speaking, kill the Lord Jesus; yet being unwilling to venture upon a Change of Life, under all the Abjurations of a bleeding Redeemer, that Stubbornness is Death to *Christ*, as God said to the *Jews*, Ezek. 6. 9. *I am broken with your whorish Heart*; so may the Saviour of the World cry to the Communicant, that comes to remember his Death, and will not die to his known Sins, *Thou piercest, thou woundest, thou killest me, by thy obstinate and refractory Temper*; as we say of a tender Father, that the ill Course his disobedient Son takes, is Death to him, because it is as grievous to him, as if one should attempt to take away his Life. The unworthy Receiver, by being loth to conform to the Rules of the Gospel in his Practices, even while he beholds, as it were, *Christ* crucify'd for his Sake, does an Act so unworthily, so disrespectful, so injurious, that it is as much as if he made Attempts upon his Life; nay, he kills the  
preventing

preventing Grace *Christ* affords him, and slays the good Motions whereby *Christ* lives in him. *Christ* is said to be in us, as we are Christians; and the unworthy Receiver, being desirous and willing to maintain and keep his darling Sins, doth thereby drive *Christ* out of his Heart, and kill him in his own Soul; for *Christ*, and Love to a sinful Life, are inconsistent and incompatible Things. These destroy his Life in the Soul; and therefore, in this Sense also the unworthy Receiver makes himself guilty of the Body and Blood of the Lord.

5. He that eats and drinks unworthily, *consents to the Murther the Jews were guilty of*, when they kill'd the Lord of Life, and approves of that barbarous and inhuman Act; and therefore is *guilty of the Body and Blood of the Lord*. He is suppos'd to consent to that Murther, that is not sorry for it. And how can he be sorry for it, that is not sorry for his Sins, which were the principal Cause of it? The unworthy Receiver being suppos'd to be one that doth not heartily shake Hands with a sinful Life, and is loth so to renounce his known Sins, as to tear them from his Heart, we cannot imagine that he is heartily sorry for them, for his Sorrow hath not those Effects which Godly Sorrow is said to have, 2 Cor. vii. 11. *For this same Thing, when ye sorrow'd after a godly sort, what Carefulness is wrought in you! Tea, what clearing of your selves! Tea, what Indignation against Sin! Tea, what Fear, i. e. of offending God! Tea, what vehement Desire! Tea, what Zeal! Tea, what Revenge!* The Tree is known by its Fruits: And if Sorrow for Sin must be discover'd by such Effects, and these Effects appear not in the Communicant, as he cannot be thought to eat and drink worthily, so in not being sorry for his Sins, he doth not appear sorry for the Murther the *Jews* committed upon the Body of our Saviour; his Sins being the Cause of that Murther. And doth not

not this look like Consent, or Approbation of that Murther? You will say, how can any Man be sorry for Christ's Death, when that Death is our greatest Comfort; and what Consolations the pious Soul feels, it feels by Virtue of that Death? Shall a Man be sorry for that which God had ordain'd, appointed, and design'd for the Relief and Redress of our Misery? If Christ had not dy'd, we had been ever wretched and unhappy, and must have look'd for no Friendship from above; and therefore, to charge Men with being guilty of his Death, because they are not sorry for it, seems to be both against Scripture and Reason. Is any Man sorry for a Treasure he finds in the Field? Or sorry for an Estate that falls to him by the Decease of a Relation? Or sorry for an Act of Oblivion which a gracious Prince imparts to Offenders, whereof himself is the Principal? But to this, the Answer is very easy; for the Benefit of Christ's Death, and the Mercy God intended Mankind by it, must be carefully distinguish'd from the instrumental Causes whereby Christ was brought to his Death; which were partly our Sins, and the barbarous Cruelty of the *Jews*. The Benefit that came by the Death of Christ, a Christian most certainly ought not to be sorry for, but hath Reason to rejoyce in, Day and Night: But that he was so inhumanly murder'd by the *Jews*, and that our Sins were such abominable Things in the Sight of God, that, to expiate them, God was mov'd to give up his own Son to the lawless Rage of those cruel Enemies; this requires our Grief and Sorrow. That the *Jews* did commit a very heinous Sin in crucifying Christ, is evident from St. Peter's Discourse, or Sermon, to the Murtherers, *Acts* iii. 17, 18, 19. For, tho' God had decreed that Death, as an Expedient to reconcile Man to himself, and decreed not to hinder the *Jews* in pursuing their wicked Designs and Purposes, but to make that Death an Antidote against everlasting Death;

yet



yet that doth not excuse the *Jews* from the Guilt of Sin in killing of him, whose Cruelty God was resolv'd to turn to the Good of all true Penitents, and sincere Believers; nor a Christian from an hearty Sorrow, that his Sins were the deserving Cause of it. So that a Christian may at once rejoyce in Christ's Death, and be sorry for it; rejoyce in the unspeakable Mercies procur'd by it, and be sorry that those stubborn Wretches did with that Cruelty dispatch him; or rather, that his Sins did arm those desperate Sinners to put the Lord of Life to Death; for the *Jews* could have had no Power to murder him, but that the Sins of Mankind, crying aloud for Vengeance, enabled them, and gave them Strength, and minister'd Occasion to it. So that he that is not heartily sorry for his Sins, is not heartily sorry that the *Jews* did murder him; and therefore the unworthy Receiver, not being heartily sorry for the Sins he hath liv'd in, consents to that Murder of the *Jews*; and, upon that Account, makes himself guilty of the Body and Blood of the Lord. Our Church therefore, in her Confession before the Sacrament, obliges all those that come to receive, to say, *We do earnestly repent, and are heartily sorry for these our Misdoings.* Now, he that is heartily sorry for his known Sins, will watch and strive against them, and take Heed he doth not, through Carelessness, rush into them again; which the unworthy Receiver not being from the Heart resolv'd to do, involves himself in that Gilt we speak of.

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*The preceding Considerations reduc'd to Practice.*

I. **H**ERE I cannot but take Notice of the great Error of the first Council of Toledo, celebrated about the Year 400 after Christ, which made a Canon, that he who had no Wife, but, instead of a Wife, a Concubine,

Concubine, ought not to be kept or debarr'd from the Holy Communion, provided that he content himself with one Concubine, and add no more. 'Tis evident that such a Conjunction is Filthiness and Uncleaness, condemn'd by the Apostle, *Gal. v. 19.* Marriage it is not, and carnal Copulations without it, are mere Fornications; as we see *Heb. xiii. 4.* And therefore such Persons, if admitted to the Communion, could not but eat and drink unworthily. Nor doth it mend the Matter, that *Leo I. Pope of Rome*, approv'd of that Canon, for that only shews, that Popes are as infallible as other Men; nay, more subject to Mistake, as they are very jealous of their Riches, and Grandeur, and temporal Interest. *Bellarmino*, to excuse this Fault, alledges, that by Concubine in that Canon, was meant, nothing but a lawful Wife, only marry'd, and taken without a Portion, or publick Solemnity. But this Conjecture must be false, because, both in the *Civil and Canon Laws*, Concubines are Persons distinguish'd from lawful Wives, and but a better Name for Whores. And as that Council did very ill to admit such Persons that were known to live in such Sins, to the Sacrament, so they did as ill to prohibit Ministers Widows, if they marry'd again, or took a second Husband, the Use of the Communion; as if an honest Marriage were more scandalous than Fornication. And though a Bishop or Pastor of the Church, is order'd by the Apostle, *1 Tim. iii. 2.* to be the *Husband of one Wife*, yet, how doth it follow from thence, that his Widow, when he dies, must never marry again?

II. There is a great Difference betwixt receiving unworthily, and being unworthy to receive; every Man that thinks himself unworthy to receive these Mysteries, is not therefore an unworthy Receiver. Alas! if we go to the Worthiness of the Person that comes to this Table, who of us can be said to be worthy to come before so holy, so jealous, so great

a God? Or, who of us is worthy of that incomprehensible and diffusive Love, represented to us in this Ordinance? If we reflect on the marvellous Purity of the Divine Nature, who of us can be thought worthy to approach it? The best of us have Reason to cry out at the Sight of that tremendous Holiness, *unclean, unclean*: There are few of us who have not Reason to complain, (to use the Words of *Thomas de Kempis*) that they are yet so carnal, so worldly, so unmortified in their Passions, so full of disorderly Motions of the Flesh, so unwatchful over their outward Senses, so often entangled with vain Thoughts and Fancies, so vehemently inclin'd to external Comforts, so negligent of the Ornament of a meek and quiet Spirit, so prone to immoderate Laughter and Immodesty, so indispos'd to Tears and Compunction, so strongly inclin'd to the Ease and Pleasures of the Flesh, so dull to Strictness and holy Zeal, so curious to hear News, and to see gaudy Sights; so slack to embrace what is humble and low, so covetous of Abundance, so niggardly in giving to pious Uses, so close in keeping what Providence hath bestow'd upon them, so inconsiderate in speaking, so unbridled to Silence, so loose in Manners, so covetous after Gain, so greedy after the Meat which perishes, so deaf to the Word of God, so apt to sit still, so slow to labour, so watchful to idle Tales, so drowsy in God's Service, so hasty to make an End of their Prayers, so inconstant in Attention, so cold in Devotion, so undevout in the Holy Communion, so quickly discompos'd, so seldom wholly gather'd into themselves, so suddenly provok'd to Anger, so ready to take Displeasure at their Neighbour's Actions, so prone to judge, so severe in Reprehension, so jolly in Prosperity, so impatient in Adversity, so often purposing much Good, and yet performing little. There are very few of us who have not Reason to deplore such Defects as these, and then, who can be



worthy to feast with the King invisible, immortal, blessed for evermore? But it is God that makes us worthy; he will not count us unworthy, if we strive against these Errors, if we labour to conquer them, if we will not be Friends with them, if we proclaim War against them, if we are resolv'd, whatever we venture, to be rid of them, if we will not hug them in our Bosoms, if we will open the everlasting Doors, and let the King of Glory come in; if we will hate what he hates, and love what he loves, and will continue our Hostility against those Lusts which interfere with his just Right and Prerogative. He will not go to the utmost Rigour with us, he will deal gently with us, liker a Father than a Judge. To let us go on in our Offences, without Remorse, or a serious Care to please him, he cannot; and such is his Holiness, that he must not. He considers our Frame, that we are Dust, and therefore will not take Advantage of every accidental Miscarriage; but he considers withal, that he hath given us his Gospel and everlasting Motives, and his holy Spirit, whereby we may certainly master the Corruptions we find stirring in us, tho' not immediately, yet by Degrees; if we are but willing, and labour, and wrestle, and are active, and do not suffer our selves to be overcome by Laziness, and the Satisfactions of this present World; and upon these Terms, he is willing to count us worthy Receivers. O Sweetness incomparable! O Condescension ineffable! beyond all that Kings and Princes express to their Subjects! What Christian, that is acquainted with this Frame, this Spirit, this humble and tractable Temper, this Resolution, and this Willingness, and that feels these Characters in his Soul, can, after all this, forbear coming, upon a Pretence of being unworthy? Coming to this holy Table with such Purposes, with such Designs, with such Qualifications, let him be confident that his

Father,

Father, his Saviour, his Redeemer, will bid him welcome. This spiritual Frame, *Christian*, will make thee worthy; thou comest not to this Sacrament to give God any thing, but to receive a Blessing from him; thou comest not hither to contribute any thing to his Happiness, but to open thy Mouth wide that he may fill it; thou comest not hither to proclaim thy Perfections, but to have thy Imperfections supply'd; thou comest not hither to boast of thy Cleanliness, but to be wash'd from thy Sins; thou comest not hither to glory in thy Merits, but to receive an Alms at thy Great Master's Hands; his Grace, his Love, his Compassion, will make thee worthy; thou comest not to give him an Account of thy Riches, but, as an hungry Beggar that wants Bread, to feed on the hidden *Manna*. All that is requir'd of thee, is, to look upon thy Redeemer as thy greatest Friend, and to use him like a Friend, to make his Friendship an Enforcive to love him; and so to love him, as to hearken to his Counsels, to be govern'd by his Directions, to bid farewell to all Things that will destroy that Friendship, to repent of thy Unkindnesses to him, and to prefer his Advice before that of Flesh and Blood; to hearken to his Instructions more than to the false Suggestions of the World; and so to remember that thy Sins have contributed to his Crucifixion, as to punish them with Frowns and Mortifications. If thou art willing to this, he will supply thy Defects, he will satisfy thy hungry Soul, he will feed thee from his Store-house, and make thy Soul Partaker of his purchas'd Possession; let not thy Unworthiness discourage thee. 'Tis confess'd thou art a poor vile Worm, a Sinner, a wretched Creature, not worthy of the least of all his Mercies, not worthy to be taken Notice of, not worthy of the least Glimpse of his Favour: But still, if he is pleas'd to count and esteem thee worthy, it is Contempt of his Love, if

thou dost not accept of this gracious Offer, and come and lift up thine Hands towards his holy Oracle. If thou wilt but look upon thy Sins as Enemies, and if they do assault thee, wilt vigorously oppose thy self against their Attempts; and if they do surprize thee once or twice, wilt renew thy Courage against them, and do any thing, rather than yield to them, and set up this Resolution in thy Heart, that the Lord shall be thy God, thou shalt be worthy; he will give thee Grace which shall make thee worthy; his Flesh shall nourish thy Soul; his Blood shall enrich the Ground of thy Heart; his Presence shall give thee Life; his Assistance will make thee spiritual; his Spirit will enable thee to rejoyce in him that made thee, make thee a worthy Conqueror, worthy of the Tree of Life, and worthy of that Pardon he hath purchas'd for thee on the Cross, *when in his own Body he bore thy Sins upon the Tree, that thou being dead to Sin, mightest live unto God.*

III. Among the various Sorts of Persons that are loth to come to his holy Sacrament, those betray strange Imprudence, as well as Obstinacy, that are loth to part with their Sins; and therefore are loth to come, for fear they should eat and drink unworlily, and make themselves guilty of the Body and Blood of the Lord, and eat and drink their own Damnation. But, O Generation of Vipers! who hath told you, that this is the Way to escape the Wrath to come? Who hath been so wise, as to inform you, that this Way you may flee from the Indignation of the Lord? In what Scripture have you read, that your not coming to this Sacrament, because you are loth to prophane it by your Sins, will save you from Perdition? 'Tis very true, and you are in the Right, when you suppose that your Refractoriness to Reformation and Amendment, makes you unworthy Receivers; but can you imagine,



gine, that you are ever a whit the safer for not coming? Will not the Sins you live and continue in, do your Work for you, and make you Heirs of Damnation? The wilful Neglect of this Sacrament, is a damnable Sin; and can you think that your not coming, will make your Condition more easy and tolerable? 'Tis true, you pretend you will not profane it, and therefore do not come: You are sensible it requires Reformation; and because your Circumstances will not permit you to lead better Lives, you are loth to add to your Danger, by eating and drinking unworthily. But when your not coming to this Sacrament, makes you miserable, as well as your coming and receiving unworthily, 'tis strange that the Point of adding some Grains to the Bulk of your Misery, should make you afraid of coming! I will not deny, but eating and drinking unworthily, doth, in some Measure, aggravate the Evil a Man lives in, because he adds Scorn to his Impiety; but as long as his Impenitence without coming, and his coming unworthily, do both involve him in the Danger of Damnation, it is a foolish Plea, to pretend you dare not come, for fear of aggravating your Condemnation, as if Damnation were tolerable, and the Degrees of it only intolerable. But we see what you drive at; you hope, some Time before you die, and when you will not have those Opportunities of sinning that now you have, you may receive it, and save your Souls at last. But to hear Men talk of what they shall do hereafter, when they have not one Minute of their Lives at their Command, is so ridiculous, that it needs no Answer. This is certain, your Sins are sweet, and your evil Lives make you fit to live in the World, and therefore you will not come. But will this Argument hold Water, do you think, when God shall plead with you? Surely your Sins are very precious Things, that you dare refuse coming to this holy Ordinance

Ordinance for them. The Scripture calls them Filth and Poyson, for so they are in the Eyes of an holy God; and are they dearer to you, than the Love of God? They are perfect Leprosy; and had you rather be full of Sores and Biles, than come hither to be made clean? They crucify'd your Saviour; and will you keep that which murder'd him? They are the Disgrace and Reproach of your Souls; and will you delight in your Infamy? They are the Things that separate betwixt a glorious God and you; and will you uphold that fatal Distance and Separation? They exclude you from the Kingdom of Heaven; and will you be content with that Exclusion? Are you wise and understanding Men; and will you not open your Eyes, and see your Danger? What do you call Contempt of God, if this be not it? What do you call slighting of incomprehensible Mercy, if this do not deserve that Name? Can you hope for God's Pardon at last, that refuse to accept of it in this Ordinance? Do you believe you have Souls, and that it is your Interest to secure them against Mischief; and will you prefer a few airy, volatile Joys, before their Safety? Sinner, when is it that thou dost intend to reform? Is it when an angry God looks thee in the Face, and an evil Conscience upon thy Death-Bed presages thy future Torments? Is it possible that an offended God will then fly into thy Embraces, whom thou didst not care for all thy Days? Behold, in this Sacrament, the Son of God doth not only offer to reconcile thee to thy God, but shews thee the Way too, how it shall be effected to thy Content and Satisfaction: Here he offers to enrol thy Name among the Friends of God; but it is impossible to make thee God's Friend, while thou maintainest thy Enmity against him. To leave thy Sins, and to come to this Sacrament, are one and the same Thing; these two are inseparable; to divide them, is to divide Light from Fire,

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which

which implies impossibility. Oh, think therefore! till I come to this Ordinance, God will be my Foe; and should I be snatch'd away while God is so, who will plead for me when I come to appear before God? I will arise therefore, and go to my Father, &c.

IV. As squeamish as some Sinners are, there are others that dare come and receive unworthily, and be guilty of the Body and Blood of the Lord, and be no more concern'd, than if they had committed any trivial or indifferent Action: Such as they who are the same after they have receiv'd, as they were before; vicious before, and vicious after; revengeful, lascivious, unclean, malicious, proud, Boasters, intemperate, Backbiters, implacable, unmerciful before, and after too; nor doth the threatening that they make themselves guilty of the Body and Blood of the Lord Jesus, fright or discompose them. Lord! how stupid a Thing is Sin! How hard, how insensible doth it make the Heart! What Venom doth it shed upon the Soul! Who would imagine that Men could be so perverse, Men that live under the Gospel too, as to be guilty of murdering Christ? Murdering of Christ! You will say, Who can murder him now he is in Glory. What Bugbears are these to fright poor silly ignorant People with? So easily do Men slide from Hypocrisy, into Prophaneness; and from Prophaneness, into the Scorners Chair! But, what if Christ be in Heaven, and out of the Reach of thy Baseness and Malice? If Christ interpret thy Continuance in known Sins, after thou hast been viewing his Death and Crucifixion in this Sacrament, as murdering of him; how great, how heinous, and of how deep a Dye must thy Sins be! What Guilt, what Loads, what Mountains of Wrath must we suppose dost thou lay, and pull down on thy Shoulders! Who can tell so well the venomous Influencies and Tendencies



cies of thy Sins, as he that perfectly understands the poysonous Nature of it? If he saith, that it amounts to murdering of him, will thy laughing at the Conceit, excuse thy Folly, when his Anger shall be kindled? Need he value thy Flouts and Jeers, that hath Flames and Vengeance at Command, to lash thee into better Manners? It is impossible he should be mistaken in his Verdict of Things; and wilt thou say, he doth not speak what is true? Art thou wiser than he; or dost thou see farther into Things than he? Must his Wisdom be modell'd by thy shallow Reason? or shall a Creature dispute the Oracle of its Creator? If he sees and knows that thy wilful Impenitence runs so high, as to make an Attempt upon his Life again, wilt not thou believe him, or darest thou charge him with a Lie? The Holy Ghost, speaking by *St. Paul*, protests so much; and wilt thou add sinning against the Holy Ghost, to all thy Offences? Believe it, Sinner; 'tis Death to the Lord of Life, to see a Creature, for whom he took such Pains, wallow still in those Sins after Receiving, which he was supposed to abjure in Receiving. 'Tis Death to him, to see thee more tender of keeping thy Word with a Man that must die, than with him that lives for ever. 'Tis Death to him, to see thee wilful in breaking that solemn Promise thou mad'st under his Cross, and didst seal with drinking of his Blood. Thou dost in this Sacrament, make a Covenant with him, and oblige thy self, as thou hopest to have a Share in his Merits, that thou wilt be guided and govern'd by *him*, who, to the Astonishment of Men and Angels, dy'd for thee, (and there cannot be a more sacred Tye) and to see thee violate that Oath, and break thro' that Vow, into Damnation, into that Damnation from which he came to rescue thee: This is Death to him, and a new Attempt upon his Life; and

if thou dar'st be so barbarous, so inhuman, as to do so, Heaven and Earth will be Witnesses against thee; and that very Blood which thou prophanest, will be a Witness against thee; and all the Saints that see thee prophane that Blood, will be Witnesses against thee; and it is enough to make the Lord repent that ever he dy'd for such a Wretch. O then play not with these Mysteries; for *it will be hard for thee to kick against the Pricks.* But,

V. Let the worthy Receiver rejoyce in the midst of all these Terrors. These Thunder-bolts do not reach him: These Threatenings do not concern him: He is safe under all these Storms: They will not fall on him, to crush him: These Hail-stones will not bruise his Head: This Weight will not sink him. He can pass through all these Messengers of Death, and fear no Evil: Even he who sees greater Comfort in a crucify'd Saviour, than in this gaudy World; and can admire the Mercies purchas'd by his Death, while others stand gazing on stately Buildings, and sumptuous Palaces: Even he who makes Conscience of performing what he promises to a glorious God, and feels Desires in his Breast to be more and more conformable to the holy Life and Example of *Christ Jesus*; and to whom no Interest is so dear as that of a crucify'd Saviour, who loves as he loves, without Hypocrisy or Dissimulation. Let such a Soul be glad in the Lord, and believe that God will command his Loving-kindness in the Day-time, and in the Night will cover him with the Shadow of his Wings. Let him not be disquieted, nor think God hath forgotten him, when his Soul is bow'd down to the Dust, and his Belly cleaves unto the Earth. *Christ*, the Son of God, will certainly manifest himself unto him, be present with him, pour Grace into his Heart, and comfort into his Soul; give himself to him, be his

his Hiding-place, compass him about with the Songs of Deliverance, and say unto him, *I will instruct thee, and teach thee in the Way thou shalt go: I will guide thee with mine Eye.* Such a Person receives Christ indeed, receives him with all his Blessings, and with all the Spoils he recover'd of the Enemy: He receives him with all the Wealth he had fought for, and purchas'd with his Blood. He receives him with all the precious Things he hath labour'd for in the Sweat of his Brows. He receives him laden, and abounding with glorious Promises, which shall, by degrees, be all fulfill'd in him; for they belong to him, they are his Right, they are his Portion; Christ will make him worthy to receive them. He shall ask, and his Master will give: He shall seek, and find too: He shall knock, and the Lord Jesus will answer, and though he may knock often, yet, at last, the Gates will be open'd to him. The everlasting Door, the Gate of Grace and Mercy, shall be unlock'd to him, and he shall get more Grace, greater Strength, larger Influences; his Incomes shall be greater, his Revenues more plentiful: He will open the Windows of Heaven to him, and refresh his Ground with kindly Showers: *They shall drop on the Pastures of the Wilderness, and the little Hills shall rejoyce on every Side.* Such a Receiver is like to abide in Christ, and his Word like to abide in him. He may be sure of his Love, sure of his Friendship, sure of his favourable Looks. For him Christ laid down his Life indeed; and he may be confident, that he is one of his little Flock, for he hears his Voice, and is willing to be guided by him: For him the Saviour of the World hath prepar'd a sure Refuge, a *Munition of Rocks*, where he shall dwell securely, free from the stormy Wind and Tempest. Such a Receiver believes in him, and he shall not die; nay, *though he were dead, yet shall he live*: Because Christ lives, he shall live too;



too: And though his Life be hid with Christ, in God, yet when Christ, who is his Life, shall appear, then shall he also appear with him in Glory. His Faith shall at last be turn'd into Fruition, his Hope into Vision, his Expectations into Enjoyment. He shall see Christ at last in his Majesty: He shall see him in his Wedding-Robes: He shall set down with him at last, at the Supper of the Lamb, and lean on his Bosom; and the Angels will say, *Behold the Disciple whom Jesus loved.* He shall walk with him in shining Garments; and the King's Daughter, which was all glorious within him, shall be all glorious without too: Her Glory shall be the Joy of Saints, and the Envy of all wicked Men. Such a Person rejoyc'd in his Light here, and he shall be deck'd with eternal Light. He that is the Light of both Worlds, shall be his everlasting Companion, and Darkness shall not annoy him. In a Word, Christ will lift up the Light of his Countenance upon him, and he shall be safe.

The P R A Y E R.

**O** Great and admirable Saviour! who hast said, I will give unto him that is a Thirst, the Fountain of the Water of Life, freely; my Soul thirsteth for thee, my Flesh longeth for thee in a dry and thirsty Land, where no Water is, to see thy Power and thy Glory! I am unworthy to receive so glorious a Guest into my Soul! I am unworthy to wash the Feet of the Servants of my Lord! Unworthy of the least Crum that falls from thy Table! The Angels, purer than the Sun, think themselves unworthy to praise and glorify thee, How unworthy then must I think my self to receive

receive thee, the sweetest, and the brightest Being, into my House! yet thou offer'st to come, and make thy Abode with me: What Bounty is this! Whence is it, that the Sovereign King of Heaven and Earth will come and dwell in me, who am a Sink of Misery, a Sty of Uncleaness, a Den of Filthiness! How unworthy am I of this astonishing Saviour! I freely confess, that I have deserv'd to be plung'd into the Depth of Hell, rather than to receive thee, the Glory of Heaven and Earth, into a Heart so desil'd, so polluted, so corrupted with Sin and Misery! yet, since thou dost freely offer me this unspeakable Mercy, come, Lord, and make thy Residence in my Soul. I desire to receive thee with all Love, and Purity, and Devotion! To this End, destroy in me all that is contrary to thee, and enrich my Soul with all suitable Dispositions to receive thee! I hate my Sins, I renounce them, I desire to think of them with Horror, because they were the Cause of thy Torments, and of that Death thou suffer'dst on the Cross; I would hate them, as the Angels and the Saints of Heaven do. I am sensible, thou art worthy of all Honour and Glory, and from my Heart wish, that I never had offended and dishonour'd thee! O that I had something of that Sorrow I see in thy Soul, when thou madest thy Soul an Offering for Sin! Thy Soul was exceeding sorrowful, even unto Death. It was my Sin that caus'd that Sorrow; O let me participate  
of

of that Sorrow! O Jesu! my Light, my Righteousness, my Sanctification, my Redemption! Open mine Eyes, that I may see the vast Mercy offer'd me in this Blessed Sacrament! Give me that Repentance, that Faith, that Love, which may make me a worthy Receiver of thy Benefits! I humble my self before thee, I throw my self down at thy Feet! I give my self to thee, I dedicate my Thoughts, my Words, my Actions, my Understanding, my Will, my Affections, to thy Service! Set up thy Kingdom in my Soul. Destroy my inordinate Self-Love, my Anger, my Pride, and all my disorderly Inclinations. Let thy Humility, thy Charity, thy Patience, and all thy Graces reign in me! Where thou art, there is Heaven. If thou art in me, I shall not fear what Man or Devils can do against me; for thou wilt hide me in the Secret of thy Presence from the Pride of Man, thou wilt keep me secretly, in a Pavilion, from the Strife of Tongues. Blessed be the Lord, who hath shewed us his marvellous Kindness; I will sing of the Mercies of the Lord for ever, with my Mouth will I make known thy Faithfulness to all Generations. *Amen, Amen.*





## C H A P. XVIII.

Of the sad Effects and Consequences of unworthy eating and drinking in this Holy Sacrament, and first, Of Temporal Judgments.

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## The C O N T E N T S.

*The Word  $\kappa\alpha\tau\alpha$ , which is render'd Damnation, explain'd, and its various Signification discuss'd. Of temporal Judgments in General, which are, or may be, procured by eating and drinking unworthily at the Lord's Table. Several Instances of Persons, who have felt signal Judgments, for prophaning Holy Things. This apply'd to the Holy Sacrament. How Men eat and drink temporal Judgment to themselves, explain'd. There being many unworthy Receivers at this Day, who meet with no signal Judgment in this Life, what we are to think of it, and how we are to reconcile this Impunity to the Truth of the Apostle's Threatning. A Question resolv'd, Whether such Judgments, if they befall an unworthy Receiver, do expiate his Sins? God prov'd to be a consuming Fire, and in what Sense. Though it be dangerous to eat and drink unworthily, yet this ought to be no Discouragement from coming to the Lord's Table. The Prayer.*

I. **T**HE Apostle, 1 Cor. xi. 29. in general tells us, *He that eats and drinks unworthily, eats and drinks Damnation to himself.* A fearful Word! The Writer of the Life of *Ida de Nivella* tells us, that whenever she pass'd by the Altar, where the Eucharist us'd to be celebrated, a trembling seiz'd up-  
on

on all her Joynts, a kind of Ague - Fit came upon her, and a sacred Horror, invaded her Soul; imitating the Earth in that Particular, which trembled at her receiving the Body of him, who fills Heaven and Earth with his Presence; but whether it was so or no, I enquire not. At these Words of the Apostle, a serious Reader hath Reason to tremble, and to be afraid, and take Care he comes not to this Table, without a decent Behaviour. And, indeed, not a few are so frightened by these Words, that they think it safer to abstain from this Sacrament, than to come to it, tho' it is evident, that they might come, and yet prevent that Danger, if they were not more in Love with their own, than God's Will: What we render *Damnation* here, is in the Original *Κεῖμα*, and we may justly question, whether by this Word is always meant, an everlasting Separation from the glorious Presence of God, having our Portion with Devils, feeling the *Treasures* of God's everlasting Wrath, and suffering the Vengeance of eternal Fire. That the Word is us'd sometimes in Scripture in this Sense, is evident from *John ix. 39.* *Εἰς κέῖμα ἔγωγε εἰς τὸν κόσμον τούτον ἦλθον*, where, tho' our Translation reads, *For Judgment am I come into the World*, yet the Greek Interpreters, *Theophylact* especially, interprets the Expression of *Damnation*, I am come into the World, *Εἰς μείζονα κόλασιν ἢ κατακρίσιν*, for their greater Punishment and Condemnation; and *Rom. xiii. 2.* *They that resist, shall receive to themselves Κεῖμα*, or *Damnation*. On the other Side, it is as certain, that by this Word, is very often understood no more than *Judgment*, and particularly some extraordinary, signal, exemplary Punishment, whether Spiritual, or Corporal, inflicted in this present Life; therefore our Translators, finding the Word ambiguous, like Men of Integrity and Honesty, have put the Word *Judgment* in the Margent; and indeed the Words, *v. 30.* where

the Apostle explains himself, and shews what he means by *Kαὶ οὕτως*, import so much, *For this cause*, saith he, *many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep*; which Words cannot be conveniently apply'd to any other, but some exemplary Punishment in this World, inflicted on the first Offenders and Profaners of this Ordinance. However, since the Word is of that large Extent, it's fit we should consider it in both Significations, as it imports both temporal and eternal Judgment, and consider the Reasonableness of the Communion; so that we shall be oblig'd to speak, 1. Of temporal Judgments in general. 2. Of bodily Sicknes and Weakness. 3. Of spiritual Sicknes and Weakness, or Sleepiness. And 4. Of Damnation itself. All which are imply'd in this one Word, and are all just Consequences, and very sad Effects of unworthy eating and drinking in this holy Sacrament.

II. I begin with temporal Judgments in general, which he that eats and drinks unworthily, eats and drinks to himself. That *Judas* receiv'd this Sacrament unworthily, none of those Divines, that believe he receiv'd it all, doth doubt; but see the Vengeance that attended him, he *went* and *hang'd himself*; and though it is confess'd, that his betraying of innocent Blood was one Cause of it, yet this unworthy Receiving may very well be suppos'd to have been another. The Judgment falling upon him, after Commission of both those Crimes, both may be justly suppos'd to have been the Ingredients of it. The Guest that came to the Royal Supper without a Wedding Garment, went home with Fetters on his Feet, *Matt. xxii. 12, 13.* which was no other than an Emblem of the Judgments that those may look for, that come defil'd and polluted with Impenitence to this Table. It hath been observ'd by most Historians, both *Civil* and *Ecclesiastical*, how God, as patient as he is, for the



the most Part, yet hath frequently reveng'd the Contempt of sacred Things, by visible Judgments. *Nadab* and *Abihu*, for offering strange Fire unto the Lord, are suddenly consum'd by Fire, *Levit. x. 2.* *Uzziah*, for invading the Priests Office, is soon after struck with a loathsome Leprosy, *2 Chron. xxvi. 19.* And *Josephus* takes Notice of one *Theopompus*, who attempting to take something out of the Bible, and to mingle it with some prophane Discourses of his own, ran mad upon it, and continu'd so for thirty Days, 'till applying himself to God by Prayer, he at last recover'd; and he adds, of one *Theodectes* a Poet, who having taken some Passages out of the Word of God, to embelish his looser Verses, a sudden Blindness seiz'd upon him. And to go no farther than our own Chronicles, *William* the Conqueror destroy'd no less than 36 Mother-Churches in *Hampshire*, to make his New Forest; and besides all this, takes away all their Plate and Treasures, even Chalice; soon after his Son *Robert* rebels against him, his second Son *Richard* was kill'd in the New Forest, and himself at last is thrown by his Horse, and dies upon't, his Body for three Days lies neglected, and at last is bury'd by a private Gentleman at *Caen*, where the Clergy refus'd to bury him, 'till an Agreement of Rent was made; and, in fine, his Bones were digg'd up again, and scatter'd abroad. *William Rufus* afterward, who stor'd his Treasure by the Sale of Church-Chalices, and Jewels, was accidentally, as the Story says, kill'd by Sir *Walter Tyrrel*, the Arrow glancing from the Deer, and by as signal a Providence dispatching him, as *Abab* King of *Israel* was kill'd by an Arrow shot out of a Bow, drawn at a venture, *1 Kings xxii. 34.* The Heathens themselves have observ'd a signal Vengeance, which hath waited on the profaners of holy Things. And therefore *Ælian* makes this Remark upon *Ochus Artaxerxes*, that having spoil'd and robb'd several Temples, he was in a short

Time after miserably slain, and his Body thrown to Dogs and Cats, and Vermin; and of his Shin-Bones his Enemies made Hilts, and Handles for Knives and Swords, and other Instruments; and *Lactantius* mentions a Passage concerning the *Potitii*, a noble Family, who having been notoriously guilty of profaning the sacred Rites of *Hercules*, thirty of that Family dy'd, all in less than a Year's Time; and *Appius*, who was the Encourager of the Sacrilege, was struck blind. And *Servius* laith of *Glauco*, the Son of *Sisyphus*, that having derided and mock'd some holy Rites, he was torn in Pieces by his Horses. If it be said, that these sad Accidents were inflicted by the Devil, whom these Heathens worship'd, and that these were only the Effects of his Tyranny over Mankind, yet from hence we may infer, that as the Devil is the Ape of God; so from God he hath learnt to punish the Abuse and Profanation, even of his own Worship. And if *Lucifer* cannot endure to see his own sacred Rites profan'd, how shall we think, that God, who is of infinite Holiness, will permit such Abuses to be committed in Things appertaining properly to him, without some Manifestation of his Vengeance. When the *French*, under *Charles* King of *Sicily*, had turn'd the stately Church of *St. Narcissus* into a Stable, and the Altars there serv'd for Mangers for their Horses, a new sort of Flies were sent by an invisible Hand, which molested them, and stung them into strange and painful Distempers, and most of them perish'd miserably. And as it is with other sacred Things, so it is more particularly with the most sacred Thing of all, the Holy Sacrament of the Lord's Supper. Bishop *Morton*, upon this Account, tells us of one *Booth* in his Time, a Scholar in *Cambridge*, who being popishly inclin'd, yet loth to own it, would still receive the Sacrament in our Church; and coming one Day to the Lord's Table, he seem'd to take the holy Bread with his Hands, and put it in

his

his Mouth, but by an easy Craft, he thrust it into his Pocket; and when the Devotion of the Chapel was ended, he took the Bread he had hid, and threw it over the College-Wall. But see the pursuing Judgment of God, soon after he threw himself over the Battlements of the Chapel, broke his Neck, and so ended his Life. St. Cyprian, one of the greatest and most eminent Men in the primitive Church, relates, that a Girl left by her Parents, in Time of Persecution, to shift for her self, and taken up by her Nurse, was by that Nurse, being timorous, and loth to lose her own and the Child's Life, for being Christians, carry'd to the Heathen Magistrate, and there made to eat and drink of the Bread and Wine offer'd to Idols, and the Heathen Deities. This Child afterward, her Mother returning, was by her conducted to Church, and came to the holy Fucharist with the rest of the Congregation; for in those Days they gave the Eucharist to Children, as well as to adult Persons, where St. Cyprian himself was then officiating. The Deacon, as his Custom was, carrying the holy Wine about, and coming to the Child, offers her the Cup, but finds a strange Aversion in her to touch it with her Lips; for through a Divine Instinct, teaching her that the Cup of the Lord and the Cup of Devils were inconsistent, and incompatible, she turn'd her Head away, shut up her Mouth, press'd her Lips together, and refus'd it with Obstinacy. The Deacon, however, (how prudent he was in doing so, I shall not dispute) using some Force upon her, pour'd some Drops of the Eucharistical Wine in her Mouth; which she had no sooner receiv'd, but she fell a vomiting, groan'd, and sigh'd, and, as the Father expresses it, *The Drink, sanctify'd in Christ's Blood, broke forth from her polluted Entrails:* And,

Serm. 5. de  
Laps.

In corpore & ore  
violato Eucharis-  
tia permanere  
non potuit. San-  
ctificatus in Do-  
mini sanguine  
potus de pollutis  
& sœcibus erupit.  
Id. Ib.



to this Purpose, he hath another Passage, of a Woman that kept the Bread of the Eucharist irreverently in a Chest, and when one Day she went rudely to open the Chest, a Fire, flashing out of the Chest, did fright her so, that she durst not come near it any more. All which Examples makes it evident, that he that eats and drinks unworthily, eats and drinks, or may eat and drink, some extraordinary temporal Judgment to himself.

III. It must be confess'd, that the Expression of eating and drinking Judgment, is not very smooth and proper, yet there is great Truth in the Metaphor; and how the unworthy Receiver eats and drinks Judgment to himself, will appear from the following Particulars.

I. By eating and drinking unworthily, he prepares for some extraordinary Judgment; which Judgment he takes, and grasps, and attracts, and pulls to himself, as Men do Bread, and Wine, or Beer, when they are going to eat and drink. The Apostle, *Rom. ix. 22.* speaks of Vessels fitted for Destruction; they fitted themselves for it by their Sins, as a Thief by stealing and robbing upon the High-way, fits himself for the Gallows; or as an idle, lazy Servant, that neglects his Master's Business, fits himself for his Master's Anger: So the unworthy Receiver, by eating and drinking Irreverently, and without Regard to the Obligations the Sight of Christ's Love and Death lays upon him, fits himself for Judgment, makes himself ripe for God's Vengeance, lays the Wood together, and erects the Pile, gathers Materials and combustible Stuff for the Fire, that will certainly burn him; and though he doth not do it designedly, and the Judgment comes contrary to his Intention, yet, as long as he doth that to which such Judgments are annex'd, he fits himself for Judgment, as much as he that will touch Vipers and handle Adders,

Adders, or let a Snake creep about in his Bosom, tho' he may intend no Harm by it, yet actually prepares and fits himself for Mischief. Eating and drinking imports some Desire after, and Delight in, the Victuals before us: So he that by unworthy Receiving prepares for Judgments, seems to delight in Judgment threaten'd him, because he will needs do that which will certainly end in some Judgment or other.

2. The unworthy Receiver eats and drinks Judgment to himself, by incorporating the Guilt of some extraordinary Judgment with his Soul, and appropriates the deserv'd Judgment to himself; and as the Sin sticks to him, so the Demerits of the Judgment which is threaten'd to the Sin, sticks to him too. He eats and drinks unworthily, and the Effect it hath upon him, is God's Indignation, which he swallows with the Food unworthily taken. God's Wrath goes along with his Sin; and as he takes the one, so he doth the other, into his Bowels. As Poyson and Death go together, so unworthy feeding at the Lord's Table, and God's Angel go together; and they both mingle with the Spirits of the unworthy Receiver; as the Fish, at the same Time that he swallows the Bait, swallows the Hook too, and he hath that fasten'd in him, which will be his Death. So that Job's Expression is very suitable to the Subject in Hand, *Job xx. 23. When he is about to fill his Belly, God shall cast the Fury of his Wrath upon him, and shall rain it upon him while he is eating.* To this Purpose, David saith of the Israelites in the Wilderness murmuring, and speaking against God, *While their Meat was yet in their Mouths,* Psal. lxxviii. 30 *the Wrath of God came upon them.* So 31.

it may be said of an unworthy Communicant. While he is feeding at the Table of the Lord, the Wrath of God breaks forth against him, becomes due to him, and is his Portion; falls to his Lot, and he gets a Title to it. We read of Henry VII,

VII, Emperor of the Romans, that he was poyson'd in eating of the sacramental Bread, given him by a Monk. This, they say, was the Fate of Pope Victor II. who dy'd of poyson'd Wine, presented to him in the *Eucharistical Chalice*, by his *Sub-Deacon*. And the same is reported of an Arch-bishop of York, that he fell down dead, and swell'd, upon receiving the sacramental Cup, given him by a Priest that bore some Spleen and Malice to him. These Men did, without a Metaphor, eat and drink their Death; And tho' he that eats and drinks unworthily, doth not, just in the same Manner, eat and drink Judgment to himself, yet the Fate that attends him doth very much resemble the Misfortunes of the other; only here is the Difference, that the other had a wicked Priest to put Poyson in their Cup. but the unworthy Receiver puts the Poyson in himself; and what was said of the other, may very truly be apply'd to him, *Calix vite, Calix mortis*: The Cup of Life becomes a Cup of Death and Misery to him. *Thou hast made us*, saith the *Psalmist*, *drink the Wine of Astonishment*, *Psal. lx. 3*. This he spoke of the afflicted and persecuted Believers of his Age, but it may be apply'd to the unworthy Receiver too. He drinks the holy Wine, 'tis true; but it will prove Wine of Astonishment to him; when the Judgment of God lights upon his Head, it will astonish and terrify him. And what is said *Psal. lxix. 22*, is true of him; *His Table becomes a Snare to him*. The Table of the Lord, he frequents, he turns into a Snare to his own Soul, while he involves his better Part in the Guilt and Demerit of signal, exemplary Judgments.

IV. But all this seems to be a groundless Supposition; for there is no Doubt, but there are unworthy Receivers at this Day, as well as formerly; yet we see no such signal Judgments executed upon any of them: And therefore, what St. Paul saith, must be either



either confin'd to the Times he liv'd in, or, if it extends to our Age, it doth not look like Truth. *1.* God sends Judgments upon Men many Times, and for their unworthy receiving the holy Sacrament too, and they take no Notice of it. When God sends Judgments, because he doth not at the same Time signify the Crimes laid against Men, or doth not set a Mark upon them, to give Notice for what Sin the Judgment comes, neither the Sufferer, nor the Standers by, especially the more careless Sort, take any Cognizance of his Anger: And the Reason why God doth not, at the same Time that he sends the Judgment, send a Messenger to tell the Sinner what the Judgment is for, is, because he hath given him Reason and Power to enquire and search into his Heart and Ways, upon which Search he may satisfy himself, and come to the Knowledge of himself. It hath been a very old Custom for Men not to take Notice of God's Judgments, but ascribe them to Second Causes, to Fate, or Chance; whereby God's Design in them hath been lost, and his Displeasure, signify'd in the Punishment, disregarded. God complains of it, *Isaiah xlii. 25.* *Therefore hath he poured upon him the Fury of his Anger, and the Strength of the Battle; and it hath set him on fire round about; yet he knew it not; and it burnt him, and he laid it not to Heart.* And so we read, *Hos. vii. 9.* *Strangers have devour'd his Strength, and he knows it not; yea, grey Hairs are here and there upon him, yet he knows it not.* Where Men are inconsiderate, and observe not the Providences of God, and the Operations of his Hand, they may easily fall into a Conceit, that he sends no signal Judgment upon an unworthy Receiver, when he doth. But let a Man enquire seriously into the Cause of his present Misfortunes, and into the Reasons of the Misery or Affliction he lies under; or, if he will lay himself open to a faithful and conscientious Minister of the Gospel, he may, without  
any

any great Difficulty, find, especially if he hath formerly been at the Table of the Lord without considering what he did, that God's Judgment upon the Account of his eating and drinking unworthily, slumbers not; *God speaks once, yea, twice; yet Man perceives it not*, saith *Elihu*, one of the *Eastern Princes*, and *Job's Friend*, *Job xxxiii. 14*. It must needs be so where Mens Reason lie dormant, and is not active. But an intelligent Observer will see, that these threaten'd Judgments are not so confin'd to the *Corinthians*, but that they reach a great Way farther, even to Men we converse with; and that these Judgments are more frequent than the generality of unbelieving People think they are.

2. If God doth not send always exemplary Judgments upon unworthy Receivers, it is an Argument indeed of his Patience; but the Sinner is not thereby secur'd from the Stroke; for that which doth not come to Day may come to Morrow; and besides, having deserv'd the Blow by his unworthy Approaches to the Table of the Lord, the Sword hangs over him by a very slender Thread, and waits only for God's Summons, to fall on the Offender's Head: And what if God exercises Patience for the present? Who knows how soon that Patience will be tir'd, and turn into a tempestuous Indignation? The Sinner hath still Reason to fear it; and that which seems to be far off this Week, may the next be upon his Back, and consume both Root and Branch. This is certain, *'Tis a fearful Thing to fall into the Hands of the living God*, *Heb. x. 31*. And if the Sinner be once fall'n into the Hands of an angry God, tho' he may spare him for a while, as he did the stubborn *Pharoah*, who had long before deserv'd to be destroy'd, only God by his Providence held him up, that he might shew his Power in him; yet, when ever the Judgment comes, the Delay will but aggravate the Doom, and change the intended Rods into deadly Scorpions. Had it been executed presently upon

upon unworthy receiving, it would have been gentle, and easier to be borne; but the Delay gives it Strength, and makes it sober; and whenever it comes, it comes with greater Weight and Fury.

V. 'Tis very probable, that some will be so curious, as to desire to know, whether, in Case any Temporal Judgments do fall upon an unworthy Receiver, they expiate the Communicant's Crime; or whether they may be call'd Satisfaction, which God accepts of, for the Offence committed against his Majesty. To this, the Answer is as follows:

1. That the Punishment inflicted by a civil Magistrate, atones for the Offence committed against the Law; and that the Offence is *ipso facto* forgiven, when the Offender suffers the Penalty, we cannot deny; and to a Man that superficially reads the *Old Testament*, even the Saints of those Ages will seem to have been of Opinion, that with the removing of the temporal Judgment, the Sin, for which it was inflicted by God, was at the same Time remov'd too; as *Psal. lxxxv. 1, 2. Lord, thou hast been favourable unto thy Land; thou hast brought back the Captivity of Jacob; thou hast forgiven the Iniquity of thy People; thou hast covered all their Sin.* And *Psal. ciii. 3. Who forgiveth all thine Iniquities; who healeth all thy Diseases.* Which Places seem to import, that *David* believ'd, that the removing of the Judgment, did, at the same Time, remove the Sin, and the Guilt of it. But still we must suppose, that tho' Repentance is not mention'd, yet it is included; and that they did not lay the Stress of Pardon upon the Removal of the Judgment, so much as upon the Repentance which was occasion'd by the Judgment; and therefore, whatever those Places may seem to import, considering that the Fathers of the *Old Testament* did all eat the same spiritual Meat, and did all drink the same spiritual Drink; for they drank of the spiritual  
Rock



Rock that follow'd them, and that Rock was Christ, 1 Cor. x. 3, 4. We must conclude, that since, under the *New Testament*, Expiation of Sin is not allow'd of without Repentance, the Fathers under the Law could have no other Apprehensions of Expiation; and tho' they mention the Removal of the temporal Judgment, as an external Sign of the Expiation of their Sin, yet the internal Mark of it, and the principal, was their Repentance; and while they name the one, they do not exclude the other. The *Jews*, at this Day, lay the Strefs of Pardon upon the Removal of the Judgment, whether they repent of the Sin that caus'd it, or not; nay, they go so far, as to make their Death an Expiation for all their Sins; by which Rule no *Jews* can be damn'd. And this comes, in a great Measure, from their misunderstanding of that Passage, *Isa. xxii. 14. And it was revealed in mine Ears by the Lord of Hosts; Surely this Iniquity shall not be purged from you till you die, saith the Lord of Hosts.* Which Words import no more than this, That God, with the Death of those wicked Men by their Iniquities, and that by their Death, God will purge the City, or the Land, from such Abominations; but not that their Death shall be an Atonement for their Sins; and therefore,

2. Nothing doth properly expiate Sin, but the Blood of Christ; and as, *without shedding of Blood, there is no Remission*; so by the shedding of Christ's Blood, Men are put in a Possibility of being pardon'd: But Repentance is the Preparative for the Application of that Blood. Till a Man repents, he hath no Title to that Blood, or the Benefits of it; and tho' God may remove the temporal Judgment, yet, if it works no Repentance, the Sin shall be produc'd against the Offender in the last Day. All temporal Judgments, tho' they speak God's Displeasure at Sin, yet they are intended, withal, for the Offender's Reformation. And to this purpose *Elihu* speaks

speaks excellently well, Job xxxiii. 19, 20, 26. He is chastened also with Pain upon his Bed, and the Multitude of his Bones with strong Pain; so that his Life abhors Bread, and his Soul dainty Meat; his Flesh is consumed away, that it cannot be seen, and his Bones, that were not seen, stick out. He looks upon Men; and if any say, I have sinned, and perverted that which was right, and it profited me not; he will deliver his Soul from going to the Pit, and his Life shall see the Light. And therefore, if this Judgment, which falls upon an unworthy Receiver, instead of softning and melting his Heart, doth but harden it; there the Judgment is so far from expiating his Offence, that it hastens and aggravates his everlasting Condemnation; and this very Sin will be remember'd in Hell, and double his Shrieks and Agonies. And this is rational to believe; for when God, by that temporal Judgment, cannot reclaim him, the last Remedy that God makes use of, to bring him to a better Mind, is lost, his Folly is incorrigible; and as that Judgment was a Talent he should have improv'd into Repentance, so, dis-regarding it, and making no other Use of it, than Pharaoh of his Plagues, and becoming more settled upon his Lees, he justifies God's Proceedings against him in the last Day; which, tho' they seem severe to the Sufferer, who is loth to feel the Pain, yet they are reasonable; and he whom temporal Judgments could not reclaim, must know at last, to his Cost, there is no jesting with the Anger of an Infinite Majesty.

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*The preceding Considerations, reduc'd to farther Practice.*

I. **T**HE Apostle is in the right, when he tells us, *Heb. xii. 29. Our God is a consuming Fire.* Indeed, to the tractable and docile, who consider his Providences, and take Notice of his loving Kindness; who see the Vanity and Uncertainty of the World, and build their Nest among the Stars of Heaven; who are sensible of the Danger of walking after the Flesh, and deliberately chuse to walk after the Spirit; who run away from *Sodom*, get themselves out of *Babylon*, will not be infected by the Sins of the World, and earnestly desire to be strengthen'd in the inward Man, with all Might: To such he is all Kindness, all Love, all Mercy, all Light, all Compassion, all Charity; as we see in the Parable of the *Prodigal*, where the Father's Acts toward the penitent Sinner are so full of Sweetness, so full of Affection and Tenderness, that nothing can be imagin'd more kind, or loving, or favourable. But Men, who undervalue the Methods of Salvation, will be happy their own Way, make light of that which they ought to prize above their Lives, are unconcern'd about the Sins that cost the eternal Son of God his Life, will needs dream of God's Mercy, while they obstruct it by their Ingratitude, and hope to enter into Heaven, notwithstanding their Neglect of purifying their Hearts and Lives; nay, can come to this Sacrament, and will not be divorc'd from those Sins, which here they profess an unfeign'd Sorrow for: Such Persons shall know, and feel, that God is jealous, and that the Lord revenges; that the Lord revenges. and is furious; that the Lord will take Vengeance of his Adversaries, and reserves Wrath for his Enemies, *Neh. i. 2.* He is, indeed, slow to Anger,



Anger, and doth not wilfully afflict the Children of Men : But Boldness in Impenitence, wakes his Vengeance ; and where his Patience tempts them to greater Wantonness, there is no dallying with their Errors. *These Things hast thou done, saith God, and I kept Silence, and thou thoughtest that I was altogether such an one as thy self ; but I will reprove thee, and set them in Order before thine Eyes.* Psal. 50. 21.

II. Because it is so dangerous to eat and drink unworthily, yet that ought not to discourage any Person from eating and drinking in this Sacrament. Worthy eating and drinking here, is not dangerous at all ; so far from being dangerous, that it is a Duty, and beneficial, and a Key to the choicest Mercies. And if it were dangerous, why should it fright any Soul from coming ? 'Tis dangerous to go to Sea ; yet doth the Sea-man therefore forbear his Voyage ? 'Tis dangerous to climb a Tree ; yet doth the Husband-man therefore let his better Fruit drop down, without getting up to gather it ? 'Tis dangerous to fight against a numerous Enemy ; but is the Soldier therefore dishearten'd from venturing into the Battle ? Danger helps us to look to our Steps ; and if there be Difficulty in an Attempt, it whets our Courage, and makes us fall on with the greater Force and Earnestness. So that if worthy eating and drinking were dangerous, it were an Invitation to an ingenuous Temper to apply himself to it ; but in this there is no Danger. What Danger can there be in Repentance ? What Danger in doing the Will of God ? What Danger in performing our Duty ? What Danger in serious Endeavours to cleanse our selves, that *we may be pure, even as God is pure* ? What Danger in eating and drinking with lively Faith in the Promises of the Gospel ? What Danger in making the Love of God, and the serious Contemplation of it, a Motive and Occasion to grow in Grace ? If

there be any Danger, it is in the *unworthy* eating and drinking at this holy Table; and in that, indeed, there is as much Danger as there is in *cutting our selves with Knives and Lances*, or in running a Sword into our Bowels; and who but a Mad-man will do so? There is nothing so good, nothing so safe, nothing so sound, nothing so innocent, but Men may corrupt it by their evil Inclinations: So they may abuse God's Name, and Day, and Word, and Ordinances, and the Duty of Prayer, and the Ministry, and what not? Unworthy eating and drinking, is a sinful eating and drinking. Let Men separate the Sinfulness from the Duty, let them pare away that poysonous Rind, and there is no Danger; and you may eat and drink at his Table with as little Danger as you eat and drink at Home. There is no Danger here, but what you make your selves: The Danger rises not from the *Eucharist*, but from your Hearts. That which makes it dangerous, is, your Love to forbidden Fruit, while you eat and drink here. This you harbour, this you cherish, and that makes your feeding dangerous: But cast out that old Leaven, and you may feed as peaceably, as contentedly, as securely, as Children under their Father's Wings, as People that sit under their own Vine, and under their own Fig-tree.

### The P R A Y E R.

**O** *Jesu!* whom I see coming toward me in this Sacrament, not with Balm, and Myrrh, and Spices, but with that which is infinitely better, even with the Balsam of thy Blood, to anoint me, to wash me, and to make me whole, to make this blind Creature see, and this lame Man to walk, this Dumb to speak, this

this Deaf to hear, and to dignify this Beggar, even the weakest in thy Flock, the poorest in thy House, the meanest Person in thy spiritual Kingdom! What shall I say of this Mercy? What can I think of it? Thou art both the Giver and the Gift, the Feeder and the Food, the Guest and the Feast, the Offerer and the Oblation: O deal with me after thine infinite Goodness! I have deserv'd to be left, to be forsaken, to be rejected, to be cast away from thy Presence! But, O! let not this miserable Beggar go away from thy Door without an Alms; scatter thy Bounty, and let me gather it. The poorer I am, the greater Object I am of thy Pity! O bring my Heart to thee to reform it: I come to offer my Soul to thee; be thou entreated to renew it by thy holy Spirit. Bring me to a more lively and nearer Conjunction with thy self, that I may become a living Member, incorporated into thy mystical Body; and may live not longer by mine own Spirit, but by thine, which is the Spirit of my Spirit, the Soul of my Soul, and the very Life of my Life. Thou art my Sun, from whose Beams I must receive the Light of Grace. Thou art my Fountain, from which I must draw living Water. Thou art the Root, from which I must receive Sap of Increase. Thou art my Head, from which I must receive Life and Being. O! let me feel the Force of this Sacrament in my Soul, Power against Sin and Satan, and Ability to serve thee. Corroborate my Spirit, that I may obtain Victory: Put off



the anxious Cares of the World, and put on Joy, flowing from Remission and Pardon of my Sins. I am sensible, that thy Table is the Strength of my Soul, the Sinews of my Mind, the Band of my Confidence, my Health, my Light, and my Recovery. Being sprinkled with thy Blood, I shall be able to turn to fight the Armies of Aliens, the Armies of my spiritual Enemies, and prevail against them; and go on from Virtue to Virtue, 'till I shall hunger and thirst no more, in thy everlasting Kingdom. *Amen, Amen.*





C H A P. XIX.

Of bodily Sickness, Weakness, and untimely Death, which is sometimes, by Way of Judgment, inflicted on unworthy Receivers of this blessed Sacrament.

The CONTENTS.

Sickness, and Weakness, and Death, are either corporal, or spiritual. Some Reasons laid down, why God makes use of Sickness, and Weakness of Body, to chastise the unworthy Receiver. How a Person may know, whether the Sickness and Weakness of Body, that is upon him, comes upon him for his unworthy Receiving. How Sickness and Weakness of Body, and an untimely Death, can be said to be inflicted for unworthy Receiving, when we see that even the most worthy Receivers sicken and die, and sometimes suddenly, and before their Time; and when it is evident, that these are Effects of natural Causes. The Time of Adversity, a Time of serious Consideration. The Soul that loves the Lord Jesus in Sincerity, hath no Reason to be troubled, when Sickness or Affliction comes, as if it came for unworthy Receiving. Worthy Receiving, the best Preparative for Death. Those that neglect coming, have Reason to fear, that all the Miseries which befall them, come upon them for their Neglect. The Prayer.

I. **H**AVING told you in the foregoing Chapter, that the Word *Κεῖμα*, or Judgment, doth import both temporal Judgment and Damnation, and shewn

how the unworthy Receiver makes himself liable to exemplary temporal Judgments in general ; it's fit I should, in the next Place, in Imitation of St. Paul, speak of the particular temporal Judgments the unworthy Communicant pulls upon himself, whereof one is bodily Sickness, Weakness, and untimely Death ; for thus we read, 1 Cor. II. 30. *For this Cause, i. e. upon the Account of this unworthy eating and drinking, many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep* ; as if he had said, this your unworthy Receiving, brings Sickness, Weakness, and a preternatural and unusual Sleep upon you : This must needs be meant here ; for ordinary Sleep, or the usual Rest of the Body, can be no Punishment ; and to tell you that by Sleep in Scripture, is frequently understood Death, or Separation of the Soul from the Body, or Dissolution of this natural Life, were to tell you what all Men know, that have but look'd into the Bible ; nor can any be ignorant, that these Phrases are often us'd in a spiritual Sense for spiritual Weakness, and Sickness, and Death, which will oblige me to take both Significations into Consideration. And that God did, in the primitive Ages of Christianity, inflict and visit unworthy Communicants with Weakness and Sickness of Body, and with an untimely Death sometimes, especially if they continu'd impenitent, thereby to put them in mind of their Offences, and to exhort them to Amendment of Life, all Interpreters agree ; and the same temporal Judgments an unworthy Receiver hath Reason to fear, and look for at this Day ; insomuch, that if many a Man's Sickness, and Weakness of Body, and not living out half his Days, were thoroughly examin'd, and look'd into, it would be found to proceed, in a great Measure, from this Cause, even his unworthy receiving of the holy Symbols.



II. If we enquire into the Reasons why God makes use of Sickneſs and Weakneſs of Body, to laſh the unworthy Receiver in this Life, we muſt conclude, that, conſidering how all Afflictions and Judgments of this Life are curative, and intended to work a Change in the Offender for the better, the Reasons why God makes uſe of Sickneſs, particularly in puniſhing the unworthy Receiver, are theſe following:

1. *Sickneſs weakens the Fleſh*, abates and leſſens its violent Deſires, whereby it comes to paſs, that the ſpiritual Part gets from under the Slavery it lay enthralld in while the Fleſh prevaild, and puts the Sinner upon ſerious Thoughts; for now it gets Leave to exerciſe its Authority, which before was over-aw'd, and crush'd, and oppreſs'd by the uſurping Tyrant, and thereby occaſions Terror and Conſternation in the whole Man about his unworthy Receiving. While the Fleſh is predominant, and bears Rule, Faith and Reason are mere Priſoners, and whatever they ſuggeſt, is not hearken'd to. The Fleſh ſtill baffles their Arguments, and admits of nothing but what pleads in favour of its brutiſh Appetite. Sickneſs coming, and weakening the Fleſh, and rendering all the Delights of the World inſipid and unſavory, the Soul recovers her Freedom, and is now at Liberty to think of her former Life, to ſurvey the Actions of her paſt Practices, and, among other Errors, to reflect upon her unworthy Receiving, to aggravate this particular Offence, and thereby to incline the Sinner's Eyes and Heart to penitential Tears: For now, the Man having no Hurry of Buſineſs, no Noiſe of vain Company, no external Gaieties, no Muſick of ſenſual Pleaſures, to call him away from minding the Things that belong to the Happineſs of his Soul, he is more at leiſure to ruminate upon what he hath been doing,

and the Dreadfulness of his Sin, *viz.* feeding irreverently at this Table, and not discerning that the Body of the Son of God was offer'd to his Soul; and if any thing will melt or turn him, this is very likely to effect it.

2. *Sickness puts the unworthy Receiver in mind of Death*; for he that falls sick, knows not but his Illness may end in Death; and there are few Men but are of this Opinion, when once they take their Bed, fear that they shall, or may die, makes them seek out for proper Helps and Remedies, send for *Physicians*, if they be able, and sometimes for *Divines* too; think of making their Wills, set their House in Order, and after all, leave nothing untry'd, whereby they may prevent the Stroke of Death. Sickness being of that Nature, and having this Influence on Men, may therefore be suppos'd to put the unworthy Receiver in mind of his Death; and as it puts him in mind of Death, so, if he have any Sense of Religion left, it minds him also of an approaching Judgment, and suggests to him, that, for ought he knows, he will shortly be in another World, be summon'd to give an Account of his Life to God, and appear before the Judge of Quick and Dead, even before *Christ Jesus*, the Son of God; whose Death hath had no Influence upon his Life; whose Blood he hath trampled under Foot, whose Sufferings he hath not much thought of, whose Love hath made no great Impression upon him, whose Charity hath wrought in him no considerable Tenderness to his Neighbour, whose Presence in the Sacrament he hath undervalu'd, and whose Intreaties to become wise unto Salvation, and meek, and humble, and serious, and blameless, he hath stopp'd his Ears against; and how little Mercy he must expect of that Judge, whom to please, he hath not been much concern'd. This Kindness, Sickness may be suppos'd to do to the unworthy Communicant,

*viz.*

*viz.* to put him in mind of his Death and future Account; and the Judge, whose Body and Blood he hath profan'd, and his Anger and Indignation against such Profanation; and what can be suppos'd more effectual to promote Repentance, and godly Sorrow, and new Resolutions to awake from the Dead, that Christ may give him Life? And therefore God makes use sometimes of bodily Sicknes, to afflict the unworthy Communicant; but where Death seizes on the unworthy Communicant, either before he can be think himself, or before a grievous lingering Sicknes hath melted and wrought his Heart into a spiritual Life, there the Man's Case is deplorable indeed; for to think that God will accept of his Death, as a Satisfaction for his Sin, and save him however, is to make a new *Divinity*, and to erect Principles which the Scripture knows nothing of. 'Tis true, in some Cases, where God cuts off a young Man in the Flower of his Age; a young Man, I mean, whose Life hath been blameless, attended with holy Fears, and a consciencious Behaviour at Home and Abroad; his untimely Death may be said to be a temporal Affliction for some accidental Miscarriages, and single Inadvertencies, such as never swell'd into an Habit, or settled Approbation; by which Affliction he is sav'd and freed from the greater Condemnation, according to the Apostle's Rule, *1 Cor. xi. 32. But when we are judged, i. e. with temporal Judgment, such as Sicknes, Weaknes, and untimely Death, whereof he had spoken, Verse 30. we are chasten'd of the Lord, that we should not be condemn'd with the World.* In this Case, *i. e.* in accidental Miscarriages, God may be said to accept of the lesser, for the greater Judgment, upon his Account, who dy'd, and rose again, for those who hear his Voice. But where the Sin is habitual, rooted in the Heart, hath invaded the Complexion, and is allow'd of, and thought harmless, and void of Hurt;



Hurt; there an untimely Death is no Security against Condemnation, no Shelter against the Wrath to come. How far it may abate or qualify the future Indignation, I am not able to say; but it is no Deletory, no Fortification, no Charm against that Storm.

III. But here a Difficulty will arise, how a Person may know that the Sickness or Weakness of Body, that is upon him, comes upon him for his unworthy Receiving? To which I answer;

1. There is not a more ready Way to know it, than by ransacking our Life; and particularly our publick Devotions. If, in our present Sickness, we find, upon Examination, that when we came formerly to the Supper of the Lord, we came without any sincere Intent, Desire, or Resolution, to be wrought into Love and Obedience to *Christ Jesus*, by the Sight of his Cross, and Death, and Charity; that we came, and went away unconcern'd, unmov'd, untouch'd, at this *Medicamentum Immortalitatis*, this *Physick of Immortality*, as *St. Dennis* calls it; or that we thought that the Blessings promis'd to the Faithful, and to those who strive, and fight the good Fight, would fall to our Share, and be convey'd to us in this Ordinance, without a true Contrition, and Endeavours to tread in our Master's Steps; we may easily infer, that we were unworthy Receivers; and that, among other Causes of our Sickness, this is one, and the Principal too, even our unworthy and irreverent Feeding at the Lord's Table.

2. Is any sick among you? Let him send for the Elders of the Church, saith *St. James*, Chap. v. Ver. 14. In the primitive Church, the sick Person, especially he that was doubtful of his spiritual Condition, sent for seven Ministers, or Presbyters of the Church,

as so many Physicians, to consult about the State of his Soul; before whom he faithfully spread his Case, giving them as candid an Account of himself as he could; and so left it to them, to judge and give Sentence in his Cause. And this also is a very rational Way to come to a satisfactory Knowledge, whether the present Sickneſs proceed from unworthy Communicating, or not. And therefore, he that falls sick, after he hath been at the Lord's Table, let him send for a faithful Guide and Director, and impartially signify, and reveal to him the Constitution of his Soul, what it hath been, and what it is; and the Actions of his Life; the Manner of his Worship, in publick and private, and how and which Way he us'd to address himself to God; what his Thoughts and Preparations were, when he us'd to go to the Table of the Lord; what he felt after Receiving; whether it left an Awe upon his Spirit, a Fear of defiling his own Soul; what his Design was in Receiving, and how far he clos'd with God: And a pious, judicious Divine, may be very helpful to the sick Person, to direct, instruct, and inform him, whether the Sickneſs be an Effect of his unworthy Receiving, or not. And, lest any should cavil here, and object, what Matter is it whether a Man know the Occasion of his Sickneſs, and what it was that brought it upon him? I shall offer, by way of Answer, these few Particulars.

1. If there were nothing but Curiosity in the Case, something might be said for a Man's being so inquisitive. In natural Causes of Distempers, Men think no Curiosity great enough; and if either we our selves, or Children, or Relations fall sick, common Curiosity tempts us to ask the Physician what he thinks the Cause of our Illness is; nay, if the Cause be unknown both to our selves and others, we have very often the Curiosity to have  
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the Body of a Friend, or Child, open'd, to know the Cause. And why People should not be as curious in spiritual Things, as they are in natural, I know no Reason. The Providences of God, and his Designs, in the various Accidents that befall us, certainly deserve our Curiosity and Inquisitiveness, much more than Things of an inferior Nature. Nor is it impossible to find out the particular Cause, why God sends such a Sickness upon certain Persons, when himself hath declar'd in his Word, in what Cases, and upon what Provocations he will send it.

2. If the Sickness be found to be a Consequence, or Effect of unworthy Receiving, this helps to strengthen our Faith in the Promises and Threatenings of God; and finding, that what the Apostle hath said so many hundred Years ago, comes to pass still, this is a very strong Argument that he spake by the Spirit of God, and a Motive to admire the Veracity of God, an Encouragement to believe the other Promises and Threatenings of the Word of God. Nothing is a greater Confirmation of Faith, than Experience; and he that hath seen the Things the Scripture speaks, very frequently accomplish'd, hath enough to turn his Faith into a full Assurance.

3. If the unworthy Receiver knows that it is his Sin, committed in the Holy Sacrament, that hath brought the present Sickness upon him; if after that, he recovers, and escapes, it will be an Obligation upon him to come to it with greater Circumspection; *For he that hath suffer'd in the Flesh, saith St. Peter, hath ceas'd from Sin, 1 Pet. iv. 1.* And therefore, having suffer'd for his unworthy Receiving, that Suffering will make him weary of his Sin; which he cannot be, except he comes for the future, *and draws near with a pure Heart; bold-*  
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ing fast the Profession of the Faith, without wavering, as it is said *Heb. x. 22, 23.* But,

IV. While we are discoursing of this particular Judgment, another Doubt arises, viz. How Sicknefs of the Body, and untimely Death, can be said to be inflicted for unworthy Receiving, when we see even the most worthy Receivers sicken, and grow weak, and die young many times, in the Prime and Flower of their Age: And nothing is more vulgarly known, than that Sicknefs and Death are nothing but the Product of natural Causes? I answer;

I. Though even very excellent Christians, who may be suppos'd to have been very penitent and worthy Receivers, ever since they frequented the Ordinances of God with any Sense and Understanding; though even such do sicken, and many Times die suddenly, and in the midst of their Race; yet that proceeds from other Causes: And these Accidents are either Tryals of their Faith and Patience, or Preparatives for Heaven, or Preservatives from Sin, or Occasions to glorify God, or Opportunities to promote the Honour of Religion, or Chastisements for some rash and imprudent Actions, to prevent their being condemn'd with the World. According to which Rule, we are to judge of the untimely Death of that Prophet, *1 Reg. xiii. 24.* who cry'd against the Altar of *Bethel*: A good Man, no doubt; but being perswaded by the crafty old Prophet, who pretended a Counter-Inspiration, he went back, and eat Bread in the Place against which he was warn'd; for which imprudent Act, a Lyon found him, and slew him. And such was the Death of *Uzzah*, *2 Sam. vi. 7.* who, out of a good Intent, put forth his Hand to uphold the Ark, that was in Danger of falling, the Oxen that drew the Cart, shaking it: For which, God struck him

him dead upon the Place. And this was the Case of *Josiah*, a Man noted for his singular Piety; yet going up rashly against *Pharaoh Necho*, was kill'd in Battle, though, according to the Course of Nature, he might have liv'd many Years longer. Thus God chastis'd the impremeditated Errors of his Servants in this Life, that they might not fall a Prey to the greater Condemnation hereafter. One and the same Effect, may have very different Causes; and the Reasons of Things that happen in the World, are various. The same Thing may be a Mercy to one, which is a Judgment to another; as the *Pillar of a Cloud*, *Exod. xiv. 19, 20.* was Darkness to the *Egyptians*, and Light to the *Israelites*; and the Meat sent to *Elijah*, was a Character of God's Love; whereas that sent to the *Israelites*, upon their Murmuring, was a Fore-runner of his Wrath and Anger. And this may be apply'd to Sicknefs, and untimely Death: In the unworthy Receiver, it is a Punishment; in the Worthy, a singular Mercy. A Prince may send two Persons, one whom he hates, another whom he loves, to Prison, with very different Intents; the one, with an Intent to have him executed according to Law; the other, to preserve him from the Rage of his Enemies: And the same may be said of Sicknefs, which we see lights indifferently upon Good and Bad.

2. Though Sicknefses, and untimely Death, are govern'd by second Causes, by Colds and Heats, by hard Labour, and Straining, by excessive Passion, and Grief, and Joy; by tedious Journies, and dangerous Voyages; by Fevers in the Blood, and Contrariety of pugnant Humours; by Winds, and Storms; by Fire, and Water; by a pestilential Breath, and going to infected Places, &c. yet he that sits at the Stern of the great Vessel, must not be suppos'd to look on carelessly, or to be nothing but

but a Spectator of the Conspiracy of the second Causes. These second Causes are constantly govern'd by a Power supream; and by his Order and Influence they move. He directs, and bids them concur to produce such Effects; and while they seem to act by Chance, and in the Dark, he himself hath pregnant Reasons, why he causes such a Concourse of inferior Causes; and these Reasons he hath thought fit to reveal in his Word, where we are to seek them. So that though an unworthy Receiver may get his Sicknes and Death by Quarrelling, by Gluttony, by Drunkenness, and Intemperance; by being wounded and bruised by rude and insolent Men; yet Providence is not asleep all this While; and though he doth not command, or approve the Sins which are the Occasion, or the immediate Causes of the ensuing Sicknes, yet he wisely permits them, resolves not to hinder them from producing such Effects, for Reasons his eternal and infinite Wisdom hath pitch'd upon; so that they may very well be intended as Punishments and Judgments, even while they are the natural Effects of second Causes: And God, in punishing the unworthy Receiver with Sicknes, and untimely Death, *lays Righteousness to the Line, and Justice to the Plummets*; there being nothing more just, than that he should fall sick, that hath been sick of God's Service; and he come to an untimely Death, that hath disregarded the Death of *Christ Jesus*, and counted it an unworthy Thing. And what if some unworthy Receivers live as long as other Men, and perhaps to a very great Age, yet that doth not make the Apostle's Words less true; nor is it any Security to the Offenders, that therefore they should go scot-free. The Threatnings of God, that concern this present Life, if they are not executed in this Life, shew, however, what the Sinner hath deserv'd; and not being



being executed here, if that which should have been inflicted here, is added to the Punishment hereafter, he hath no great Reason to brag of his escaping here. Sometimes the Sinner bethinks himself, and repents, and turns from his Error, and by that Means escapes the sad Effects of Threatening; for all Threatenings have this implicate Condition included, *In Case the Offender doth not make his Peace with God.* And to all this, that if the Threatenings of God be executed upon some Persons, guilty of the Sin to which the Threatening is made, it is enough to vindicate the Veracity of God; and if any Sinner, of the same Size and Degree, do escape, still the Threatening shews what they may expect if they turn not.

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*The preceding Considerations reduc'd to Practice.*

I. **T**HE wise Man's Advice, surely, is very reasonable, *Eccles. vii. 14.* *In the Day of Adversity consider.* Times of Affliction are considering Times; Affliction is sent on purpose to teach, and to instruct us: 'Tis intended to put us in mind of the Sins we have forgotten, or been wilfully ignorant of; the Sins of our Childhood, the Sins of our Youth, the Sins of our riper Age, and the various Neglects and Defects of our holy Services. And therefore, in the *Old Testament*, the Word *יָסַר* *Jasar*, which stands for Affliction, imports not only Correction and Chastisement, but Instruction too: It is an excellent School-master; and he that submits to its Teachings, will become wiser than a Multitude of Books will make him. *Therefore, my Son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuk'd of him, Heb. xii. v.* Consider who it is that sends the Rod, and what the Design of the unwelcome Messenger is. Consider

sider how much thou need'st it, and how justly thou hast deserv'd it. Consider how it is intended for thy Good; and how thou should'st have forgotten why thou camest into the World, but for this Remembrancer. Consider how little Reason thou hast to take it ill, when the dearest Servants of God have pass'd through this Fire; and how, without it, thou wouldst have continu'd a Stranger to thy self. Consider its Mercy, that he will call Home the straying Sheep, and will not let thee wander in the Wilderness of Sin: And that when he strikes, his Intent only is to beat the Dust out of thy Cloths, not to hurt the better Part. This Consideration will go near to produce that excellent Temper in thee, which *David* speaks of; *Surely I have behav'd and quieted my self, as a Child that is wean'd of his Mother: My Soul is even as a wean'd Child,* Psal. cxxxi. 2.

II. Let not him that is weak in Faith, yet loves the Lord *Jesus Christ* in Sincerity, makes Conscience of his Laws, and would not willingly offend him, to gain the World; let him not be frighted when Sickness, or any outward Disaster, and sad Accident befalls him, as if that were a certain Argument, that therefore he hath receiv'd unworthily. The Enemy may suggest such a Thought; but, *Christian*, explode it as boldly as it comes. They are other Reasons that make thy Heavenly Father lay his chastening Hand upon thee. His Design is, to make thee entirely conformable to his own Son; to that Son, who, *for the Glory set before him, endur'd the Cross*. He was made perfect through Suffering; so would God make thee perfect through Affliction. If a Person be never so holy, yet if he hath not pass'd through the Furnace of Affliction, he wants Perfection. Afflictions gave the Son of God, as he was Man, a Title to his

his Fathers Kingdom ; and they are *Items* to thee, that thou shalt reign with *Christ* for ever. These Troubles that encompass thee, are to make thy future Joys the greater, and thy Crown more bright and shining. Fear not that thou hast receiv'd unworthily, while thy Conscience bears Witness, that thine Eyes, thy Heart, thy Affections, were towards him in the Holy Sacrament, and are so still ; if thy Treasure and thy Heart was in Heaven then, and thou still endeavourest to preserve that Frame, thy eating and drinking hath done thee good, and thou hast been refresh'd by it, and *the Lines did fall to thee in pleasant Places*. These present Afflictions are thy Security, that God loves thee ; and as they tell thee, that thou hast no continuing City here, so they help to prepare thy Soul for the Possession of that Inheritance which shall last for ever.

III. Worthy Receiving of the Lord's Supper, is the best Preparative for Death. No Man can die uncomfortably, that makes it his Business, as often as he comes to this Table, to receive worthily. Death cannot hurt him, let it be natural or violent, untimely or orderly ; for, by this worthy Receiving, he hath laid up a good Foundation against the Time to come. Death may destroy his Body, but cannot kill the Soul. Death may fright him, but it cannot undo him. It may dislodge his Spirit, but it drives it to a nobler Habitation. It may expel the Guest, but it gives him a Title to a better Building. His worthy Receiving gives him an Interest in Christ's Death ; and because Christ lives, he shall live also. Death may come blustering, and make a Noise ; but in that Whirlwind his Soul rides to Heaven. Let his Death come by Sword, or Famine, or Torment, or Fire, or Water, it makes no Alteration in his Happiness. *To him*



to live, is Christ; and die, Gain: And he knows who hath said, *I am the Resurrection, and the Life.* The worthy Receiver never dies, for he lives in Christ, who abides for ever. Christ will not suffer that Soul to perish, in which he hath been pleas'd to make his Habitation. He is concern'd to secure her Happiness; and his Eyes are open upon her, to do her good. Her worthy Receiving, arms her against the Fears of Death, and scatters the Mists which Death doth cast before her Eyes. Receiving worthily, makes the Soul a fit Habitation for the Spirit of God; and if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the Dead, dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the Dead, shall also quicken your mortal Bodies by his Spirit that dwells in you. Rom. viii. 11.

IV. As the unworthy Receiver, when Sickness, or some other heavy Judgment, lights upon him, hath Reason to believe that it is for his unworthy Receiving; so he that wilfully neglects coming to this Holy Sacrament, may very justly conclude, that all the Troubles and Miseries that befall him, do, in a great Measure, befall him for that Neglect. 'Tis hard to determine which is the greater Sin, whether receiving unworthily, or not receiving at all; both will admit of great Aggravations: And as these Sins are in a manner equal, so it is not irrational to conclude, that the Judgments threaten'd to the one, may be inflicted for the other too. As the Jews say of the *Golden Calf*, that an Ounce of that Sin, is an Ingredient into all the Calamities that came upon them; so there is not a Cross, that the wilful Neglector of this Sacrament feels, or endures, but he hath Reason to think that this Neglect contributes towards it; and all his Miseries call to him, though he will not hear the Voice, not to neglect so great Salvation; and if all these Calls cannot awaken him into a Sense of his Duty,

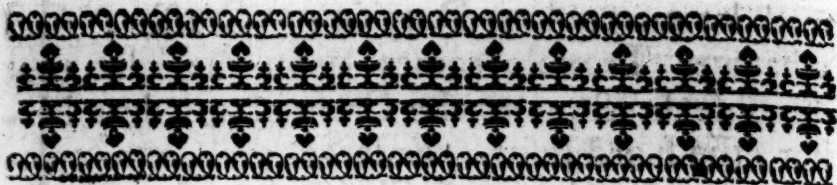
how must his Reckoning swell, and how inexcusable must he be, whom neither the still Voice of Prosperity, nor the shriller Sound of Adversity, can convince? *Take, eat, this is my Body, and drink ye all of this,* is a Duty, as much as *doing by others the same that we would have others to do us.* It will appear, and be made out one Day, that this was not an Evangelical Counsel only, which the more religious Sort, that are ambitious of the highest Place in Heaven, need only mind, if they please. It was said to all the Disciples that represented the Church-Militant, And if thou professest thyself a Member of that Church, thou art no more excus'd from the Performance of it, than thou art from coming to Church, and attending the other Ordinances of God. But if these Motives cannot prevail, God hath Enforcives which shall; but from these *Good Lord deliver us.*

*The P R A Y E R.*

**O** God! when thou with Rebukes dost chasten Man for Iniquity, thou makest his Beauty to consume away like a Moth! Hear my Prayer, O Lord, and give Ear unto my Cry; hold not thy Peace at my Tears. Oh! let the Afflictions which have befallen me, and which thou shalt hereafter think fit to send upon me, help towards the strengthening of my Faith in Christ Jesus. Thou hast sometimes laid thy Hand upon me, thy afflicting Hand, and I have taken no Notice of it. Thou hast smitten me, and I have not looked up to Heaven, from whence the Stroke did come. Thou hast corrected me, and I have not been the better for it. I have been like a Beast before thee; so  
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foolish was I, and ignorant. Oh, teach thou me ! let me read my Duty in my Crosses : And whatever Trouble comes upon me, let that Trouble direct me to the Cross of my dear Master, the Lord Jesus. Enlarge my Contemplations of the Cross of Christ, by the Crosses that knock at my Door. Let these make me more zealous to participate of the Benefits of the Cross of Christ. In these Crosses and Troubles, let me find Motives to come with greater Seriousness to the Table of my crucify'd Redeemer. Let these prompt me to run to the Tree which yields the Fruit of Righteousness. Let not these discourage me from loving thee ; but rather inflame my Affections to make thee my Hope and Fortress, my Light and my Salvation. Let me look upon the Joy that all my Troubles will at last end in, and take Comfort in all my Tribulations. Imprint this Belief upon my Soul, that thou knowest better what is good for me, than my carnal Heart. I am apt to hanker after the *Flesh-Pots of Egypt* ; but let me see the richer Table in thy Kingdom. I am apt to be fond of those outward Comforts ; oh ! quench my Thirst after them. Let me see clearly, that to feed on thy Love, is better Diet than this Earth affords. Give me thy Peace ; not as the World gives, but as thou usest to give thine own People. Oh ! give me what I want ; thou knowest my Necessities better than I. Give me better Things than my Flesh desires, even those which may preserve me by thy Power, thro' Faith, unto Salvation, thro' Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*





## C H A P. XX.

Of spiritual Weakness, Sicknes, and Death, the second temporal Judgment, inflicted sometime on the unworthy Receivers of this Holy Sacrament.



## The C O N T E N T S.

*The Eucharist a Cure for all Diseases, yet many continue weak and sick after it. The Cause shewn to be in themselves. The Signs of spiritual Weakness, Sicknes, and Death. God inflicts these spiritual Judgments upon unworthy Receivers by Degrees. The Justice of it vindicated, in four Particulars. Spiritual Weakness and Sicknes, prov'd to be a greater Judgment than the Corporal. Of the End of our eating and drinking worthily at this Table, which is spiritual Health; and wherein that consists. Spiritual Judgments more common than Men think or suspect. Our Souls are capable of Diseases, as well as our Bodies. Several Instances and Proofs given of it. The Cure of spiritual Weakness and Sickneses, laid down in several Particulars. The Prayer.*

I. **A**S corporal, so even spiritual Weakness, Sicknes, and Death, proves too frequently an Effect of eating and drinking unworthily at this Table:

ble: Nay, these spiritual Sicknesses are more common than the other. 'Tis true, they cause no Pain, no Aches, no Torments in the Bowels; they are not felt as the Plurisy, or Cholick, or Twisting of the Guts; but they are Sicknesses still. And because we find such Things, and God manifests his Anger often against unworthy Receiving, by such Symptoms, we have Reason to believe the Apostle aim'd at these, as well as at bodily Diseases, when he avers, *For this Cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep.* 'Tis true, there is not a more proper Medicine for all the Diseases of the Soul, than this holy Sacrament.

To which purpose, *Albertus Magnus* saith very appositely, *If in the Eucharist,* De Sacram. Dist. 5. Tract. 1 cap. 4. *in the Remembrance of our Saviour's Passion, we reflect on his Humility, it will*

*free us from the Infection of Pride. If we think of his wonderful Charity, we shall be deliver'd from the Evil of Envy. If we consider with what Alacrity he went to die for us, and to offer himself in Sacrifice for us, it will be an Antidote against Weariness of his Service, and Backwardness to Devotion. If we ponder his Bounty, and how liberally he gives us himself, and all he hath, we shall be rid of Covetousness. If we lay his Meekness and Patience to Heart, it will be an excellent Remedy against Wrath and Anger. If we remember how frugal his Supper was, and how far from Pomp and Ostentation, and how mean the Food was he made Use of, it will check our Gluttony and Voracity. And if we cast our Eyes on the bitter Herbs he eat, the Emblem of his bitter Passion, we shall not be troubled much with Luxury.* And to this

Purpose was the Saying of Innocent De Myster. Missel. 4. c. 44. III, *That the Mystery of the Cross frees*

*us from the reigning Power of Sin; and the Mystery of the Eucharist, from a Desire to Sin.* And if the Woman in the Gospel was cur'd of her Infirmary by touching but the Hem of Christ's Garment, what Virtue may we suppose in his whole Body, if it be

touch'd by a lively Faith in this Ordinance? If God hath given to the Fat of Vipers, Virtue to expel Poyson, shall not we think there is greater Virtue in Christ's crucify'd Body, to cure the Diseases of the Soul? If he gave Virtue to the Tree of Life in *Paradise*, to prolong Age, and to procure Perpetuity of Duration; shall not Christ's Flesh, represented by the Symbols here, confer Life, and Health, and Salvation much more? If he have given some Minerals Virtue to disperse Fumes and Vapours; shall not we believe there is greater Virtue in the incarnate Son of God, to disperse the Clouds and Fogs that molest and annoy the Soul? This cannot be deny'd; and we may rationally believe, that this Sacrament is intended by God to cure all the Distempers of the Soul: But if that Medicine be not us'd as it ought, the Soul, instead of growing stronger, becomes more weakly, more sickly, and draws nigh unto the Gates of Death.

II. What this spiritual Weakness, Sickness, and Death is, will not be very difficult to discover. If you mind the Apostle's Expression, there is a Gradation in the Judgment he speaks of; *Weakness* is a lower Degree of Misery, than *Sickness*, and *Sickness* a lower Degree than *Death*. The first Act of God's Displeasure against Receiving unworthily, is, to inflict Weakness; if that works no Reformation, then Sickness; and if this doth not make the Sinner rise, then spiritual Death.

1. Spiritual Weakness. And this may be said to consist in these following Particulars:

1. *In the Loss of lively Apprehensions of spiritual Things, which were formerly vouchsaf'd to the unworthy Receiver.* Even Men that are Hypocrites in Religion, and whose Hearts were never thoroughly chang'd, have sometimes Flashes of Heaven or Hell, coming either from without, or from within. *Abab* -  
certainly



certainly had a very great Sense of God's Displeasure, and a Sight of Divine Vengeance surpriz'd his Mind, when *he rent his Cloaths, and put Sack-cloath upon his Flesh, and fasted, and lay in Sack-cloath, and went softly,* 1 Kings xxi. 27. And some of us may have known some Persons, who have been given to Drinking, or Swearing, or Lying, or Uncleanneſs, or Quarrelling, when their Office, or Employment, or Station in the World, or some ſuch external Cauſe and Motive, have put them upon receiving the holy Sacrament; before they have come to this Table, they have had ſome very ſerious Thoughts, and you might obſerve in them a Demureneſs of Behaviour, ſome Apprehenſions of the Neceſſity of Repentance; and ſometimes their Hearts have been ſo touch'd, that even a few Tears have drop'd from their Eyes, as a Teſtimony of their being mov'd at the Thoughts of *Chriſt's* Death and Paſſion; but the Sacrament being over, their Devotion hath been at an End too, and they have return'd to their old Sins, which made them unworthy Receivers, becauſe this ſhews they were not heartily reſolv'd, when they came to this Table, to ſubdue their Corruptions. Their lively Apprehenſions of ſpiritual Things, they formerly had, have thereupon grown dark and decay'd, become languid and faint, and no Foot-ſtep of them hath been left. Thoſe Flaſhes of good Thoughts, tho' ſhort and tranſitory, had they been improv'd, would have ſignally ſtrengthen'd their Souls, and encourag'd their practical Love to Chriſt Jeſus: But being careleſs and regardleſs of that Improvement, God juſtly lets thoſe lively Apprehenſions decay; and thence comes their ſpiritual Weakneſs. God could uphold thoſe lively Apprehenſions; but they having no Love to them, God, by a ſecret Judgment, lets them wear out: And then, what can be the Iſſue, but ſpiritual Weakneſs?

2. *Irresoluteness to resist Temptations, is another Symptom of this spiritual Weakness.* When the Soul is either unresolv'd whether it shall resist such known Temptations, or not, or resist them but faintly, it is a Sign the Powers of the Soul are shaken, and the Plague is begun in the Heart. By Temptations, I mean such Temptations as are agreeable to our sinful Temple and Inclination, or such as our Calling and Employment makes us subject to. He that observes, and takes a View of such Sinners as receive unworthily, cannot but spy in them a very feeble and irresolute Resistance of such Temptations: For, notwithstanding whatever Resolutions they made before Receiving; whatever Prayers and Supplications for God's Grace and Assistance, they offer'd, and put up before, yet, after they have been at this Table, the old Temptations return, even the same dear Friends that entic'd and perswaded them to sin before; their Resistance is very weak, and they know not well what they shall do, whether they shall displease their own, and other Men's vain Desires, or no. Perhaps some little Horror, or kind of Damp, the Sacrament for the present leaves upon their Minds, hath so much Force upon them, that they make some Attempts, and use some trifling Endeavours to resist; but as this Resistance is not an Effect of an active Faith, but only of slavish Fear, so it doth not preserve them untainted, and undaunted, in the Hour of Temptation, which is an Argument both of spiritual Weakness, and God's Judgment, because *they did not like to retain God in their Knowledge, as St. Paul speaks, Rom. xxviii.*

2. Spiritual Sicknefs, the Signs of which are as follows:

1. *Want of relishing the Things of God, and the Mysteries of Religion.* By this we conclude, that a Man is sick in his Body, if the Bread, or Wine, or Apples, or Meat, he swallows, seem to him Food or Drink, different

different from what they appear to sound and healthy Men ; and by the same Argument, we may infer, that a Man's Soul is very sick, when the Promises, Precepts, Commands, Mercies, Priviledges, and Immunities of the Gospel, are insipid and unfavoury to him, as his Soul finds no Sweetness, no Agreeableness, no Juice, no Life, no Pleasantness, no Delight, no Pungency in them : If these appear to her as common Things, and affect her no more than what the *Great Mogul* doth in the *Indies*, or what Men talk on the Coast of *Guinea* : If they raise no Wonder, no Admiration, no Affection, no Appetite, no strong Desire in her ; if she can hear them, read of them, survey them, think of them, without being touch'd with the Consequence and Importance of them, the Soul is infallibly under some great Distemper, and the whole Head is sick, the whole Heart is sick, grievously sick, and the Wound is dangerous ; and that this spiritual Sickness discovers it self too often in unworthy Receivers, we need no other Proof, but what their known Aversion gives us ; I mean their Aversion from good Thoughts and Discourses, after they have been at the Table of the Lord. Reading the Word, digesting it, and endeavouring to see wondrous Things in that Law, and meditating of some Part of it Day and Night, is irksome to them, tedious : And when something favouring of Heaven and Eternity is propos'd to them, they stand upon Thorns all the while, nor can the Goodness of God prevail with them, to deny themselves in any Thing they have a Mind or strong Inclination to, a certain Sign of their being sick, and of God's Judgments upon their Souls.

2. Another Symptom of this spiritual Sickness, is, when a known Sin becomes habitual, and the few single Acts pass into Temper, and come to be incorporated with Nature, and turn into Constitution and Complexion. In this Case the Soul may be judg'd very sick, as sick  
as



as the Body that is troubled with the Stone or Gout, and where the Distemper or morbidick Matter is so dispers'd thro' the Mass of Blood and Joints, that tho' it admits of Respite, and lucid Intervals sometimes, yet, as the Humours that feed it, gather Strength again, so the Distemper returns. And this Sickneſs doth evidently discover it self in unworthy Receivers, who were formerly but Punies and Novices in certain Sins; but, after their unworthy Receiving, harden themselves in the Practice of them, commence Graduates, and drink them in as the Ox doth the Water; and they become their Darlings, their *Benjamins*, as dear to them as their right Eye, as dear as their Foot or Hand; than which, their cannot be a surer Sign of their being spiritually sick, and lying under the Weight of a spiritual Judgment.

3. Spiritual Death; and this also is to be known by Symptoms, which are these;

1. *When the Conscience smites no more*: When it gives over striving with the Sinner, he is dead as that Body in which the Pulse hath left off beating. So it was with the *Prodigal*, of whom Christ expreſly ſaith, tho' his natural Life was ſound and whole, *that he was dead*: No Remorſe, no Regret appear'd in his Soul. All was ſtill as in a Charnel-houſe, no Noiſe within to fright him. All was turn'd into the Silence of the Grave. He delighted in his Naſtineſs, in his Mud, and Dung, and Filth, and ſwiniſh Deſires; nothing prick'd him, nothing ſtung his Heart. And that this Death is to be found in ſome unworthy Receivers, is manifeſt from their Actions, for they become ſtupid in their Errors, and having baffled their Conſcience, laid that inward Witneſs to ſleep, and huſh'd it into a fatal Slumber; it ſtirs not, it moves not, and they know not when they ſin, and when they do not. To that Inſenſibility they bring themſelves, that when God calls, they

they cannot see with their Eyes, nor hear with their Ears, nor understand with their Hearts.

2. Another Symptom of this spiritual Death, is, when the Sinner begins to look upon Religion, either as a Trick of Divines, or Politicians, or a needless Thing. This excludes all Sense of another World, the only Thing whereby the Soul lives; and therefore that being gone, the Soul is dead; and that he who hath the Power of Death, even the Devil, hath kill'd and mortify'd all the good Seed that lay scatter'd in his Breast. Indeed, this is such a Degree of Death, which unworthy Receivers do not very ordinarily arrive to, yet sometimes they fall even into this Gulph; for what should hinder them from tumbling down so low, that have lost their Hold in a crucify'd Saviour, from whose Arms they have broke loose, unwilling that he should have any Thing to do with them, but just to save them, if he pleases? The Bands of Love and Obedience, are the only Things that preserve the Soul from Death; and the unworthy Communicant having made a Shift to throw those Cords from him, being loth to be ty'd and held by them, he sinks into Contempt of those Things, and from thence, into scorning of Religion it self. In all which the Judgment of God is clearly to be seen; for tho' God doth not call by an audible Voice from Heaven, that it is so, nor set a Mark upon the unworthy Receiver, as he did on Cain, whereby Spectators may know that this is a Sign of the Divine Judgment upon him; yet its enough that we are told in the Word of God, *Woe to them, when I depart from them*, Hof. ix. 11.

III. And from hence it's easy to guess how God inflicts this spiritual Judgment upon unworthy Receivers.

i. By a gradual withdrawing his holy Spirit from them. This Spirit is call'd Oil, Heb. i. 9. and *Unction*, or *Anointing*,

*Anointing*, 1 John ii. 27. Whatever the Quantity of that Oil was, that was put in their Lamps, as that abates, so the Strength of their Soul abates; and from hence come spiritual Weakness, Sickness, and Death. The Spirit of God, is the Pillar that supports the House; if this Prop be remov'd, the Inference is easy, that the House will not be of any long standing. There are general Gifts of the Spirit of God, common to good and bad Men under the Gospel, and there are some that are peculiar to those that walk after the Spirit; and as in an unworthy Receiver, we can suppose none but general Gifts; so even these, upon his Abuse, and misemploying of them, are gradually remov'd, as Men take Meat and Victuals away from insolent Beggars, that throw their Gift upon a Dung-hill; and as a charitable Pension is withdrawn, when we find that the Party which enjoy'd it, spends it in Ale-houses and Taverns, or in Play.

2. *By a gradual permitting the Devil to exercise his Power and Jurisdiction upon them.* God doth not very frequently suffer the Enemy to fly upon the Offender with all his Force, or to ruin him at once, but he lengthens his Chain by Degrees, to see whether the Sinner will yet give himself Leave to think, and attempt to be freed from that intolerable Yoke and Slavery; but that Tenderness and Patience of Almighty God becoming fruitless and ineffectual, the Judge gives the Executioner greater Liberty to darken his Mind, to pervert his Will, and to sear his Conscience. Time was when but one Devil was permitted to tyrannize over him; but if instead of being angry and displeas'd at that single Foe, the unworthy Communicant embraces, and makes him his Friend, then that Devil takes with him seven other Spirits, more wicked than himself, and they enter in, and dwell there; and the last State of that Man is worse than the first, saith Christ,

*Matth.*



*Matth. xii. 45.* Nor is there any Thing of Injustice in these Proceedings of God. For,

1. It is nothing but *Lex Talionis*, a just Retaliation, a Rule whereby God ordinarily governs himself in the Execution of his Judgments, *Hof. vi. 4.* He tells *Judah* and *Ephraim*, *Your Goodness is as a Morning Cloud, and as the early Dew, it passes away.* The Judgment therefore is made proportionable, *Hof. xiii. 3.* *Therefore they shall be as the Morning Cloud, and as the early Dew that passes away;* so here the Sin is spiritual, the Judgment is so too. The unworthy Receiver wrongs his own Soul, and in his Soul the Marks of God's Wrath appear.

2. God, in this Case, doth no more than what we our selves do, and think our selves very reasonable and just for doing so. A Father reduces his Spend-thrift Son to a smaller Allowance; and the Ground that will not bear any Thing after a World of Toil, we dung, and dig, and manure no more. In this Manner, and for Reasons like these, God withdraws his Holy Spirit from the unworthy Receiver.

3. As the Devil is God's Minister of Justice, his Jaylor, and Hang-man, so he may justly make use of him to judge and lash the unworthy Receiver, the rather, because he wilfully hearkens to the base Suggestions of his sworn Enemy; and who finds Fault with a Prince, or Magistrate, for sending an Executioner to behead or hang those that have committed Treason, or conspir'd against their lawful Sovereign?

4. That God doth gradually send this spiritual Judgment upon unworthy Receivers, this speaks his Goodness, Compassion, and Patience, and shews how loth he is to give up *Ephraim*, how loth he is to deliver up *Israel* to the Rage of the Enemy, how loth he is to make them as *Admah*, and to set them as *Zebobim*; so that there is Charity mingled with

with the Justice, and in the midst of his Anger, he remembers Mercy.

IV. And this will give us Occasion to enquire which of these two Judgments is greater, the Temporal or the Spiritual. And here, if we consider the Mischief done by them, we must conclude, and assert, that the Spiritual is greater. For,

1. Pain, and Sicknes of Body, may yet bring a Man, or drive a Man, to a true Repentance, and a Sight of the Errors of his Ways, as we prov'd in the foregoing Chapter; but this Spiritual Weakness makes the Way and Passage to Repentance, more difficult; and the more any Thing doth hinder a Man from Repentance, the more dangerous it is. Spiritual Weakness, Sicknes, and Death, supposes, that the Faculties, which should be chiefly employ'd in the Product of Repentance, are out of Order, and violated; such as the Understanding, the Will, and the Affections. Bodily Sicknes very often puts these into a new Fermentation, and a strong Desire after Spiritual Things. But when the very Tools, whereby the Soul is to work, are blunt, and their Edge rebated, or are become rusty and useles, the Work is very likely to be left undone. *If therefore the Light that is in thee, be Darknes, how great is that Darknes!* saith our Saviour, *Mat. v. 23.*

2. The Spiritual Judgment is the more dangerous, because it is less perceiv'd, and taken Notice of, than Bodily Sicknes. If a Man feel the Smart and Pain of his Wounds and Sores, they oblige him to seek out for a Physician for Remedy, for Counsel and Advice; and so we find it is, for the most Part, with all Diseases of the Body, which cause Anguish and Grief, and great Inconvenience and Disorder in the Body; yet, among these various Distempers, some there are, where the Poison

creeps along in the secret Parts, and Men perceive it not, 'till it seizes upon the Vitals, invades the very Heart, and tows the Bell for Death; and these we count the most dangerous. Of this Nature, is Spiritual Sickness and Weakness: It leaves the Body in the same Temper it found it in. causes no Prickings in the Back, no Stitches in the Side, no Disturbance in the Head: It lets Men eat, and drink, and sleep, and walk, and do their Business; and as to the outward Man, they feel no Inconvenience, which makes them think, that they have nothing of a Distemper about them, and all is safe, and they ail nothing. For this Spiritual Sickness cannot be perceiv'd without Thinking, and Self-Examination, which being neglected, Men feel it not; whence it comes to pass, that it spreads insensibly in the Dark, while Men are asleep, and, by Degrees, corrupts the Soul, 'till all its Goodness be consum'd; and consequently, this Spiritual Judgment is greater than the Corporal.

3. The Spiritual Judgment is a Sign of God's great Anger too; and tho' it will not enter into the Thoughts of a sensual Man that it is so, or that any Thing can be a Sign of God's Anger, but what relates to Losses, and Disappointments, and Crosses in the outward Man, and in the World; yet enlighten'd Souls have ever look'd upon Spiritual Sickness and Death, as a Sign of God's heavier Wrath and Indignation, because, in this Case, God doth as it were let Men alone, leaves them to themselves, and his not punishing of them with bodily Troubles, looks like an Averſion from their Persons; and so much we may guess from what we read, *Hos. iv. 14, 17.*



*The preceding Considerations reduc'd to farther Practice.*

I. IF Christ, and his Apostles, press eating and drinking, and drinking worthily at this Table, it is, because they would have our Souls be in perfect Health; and they are then in perfect Health, when they rejoyce in the Lord always. *Thomas Aquinas*, upon that Saying, *Cant. i. 13. A Bundle of Myrrh is my beloved unto me*, observes, that as Myrrh preserves Bodies from Corruption, so Christ, taken and contemplated in the Holy Sacrament, preserves the Soul from various Diseases. Health is best known by Fruits and Actions; and, as a sick Man cannot perform what the Healthy doth; so that Christian that doth not act like a healthy Man, can boast of no great Matter he hath receiv'd in this Holy Ordinance. This is intended to give our Souls the Strength of a Lion, the Swiftnes of Eagles; the Alacrity of Angels, and the Temper which was in the incarnate Son of God; and if we receive worthily, we shall certainly feel these Effects, in some Degree at least; for it's plain, that they are felt by others, that are worthy Communicants; and what should hinder us from feeling the same, if we come furnish'd with the same Qualifications? Those that are acquainted only with Men, as carnal as themselves, may possibly think, that when we talk of Things of this Nature, we speak Spiritual Romances, and tell them Stories next to Fables; but those that have been conversant with Persons who have chosen the better Part, must needs perceive what Health and Vigour worthy Receiving adds to their Souls. For what makes them, that they delight in the Law of the Lord, in the inward Man? Or what makes them afraid

of

of the very Appearance of Evil? What makes them converse with God so often by Prayer and holy Thoughts? What makes them contented under their Misfortunes and Disasters? What makes them take such Comfort in the Cross of Christ? What makes them silent and patient under private Injuries? What makes them stand up for the Glory of God, when they see it prophan'd and abus'd? What makes them so ready to deny themselves? What makes them so solicitous about their everlasting State? What makes them kind and tender-hearted, and so easy to be intreated to that which is good? What makes them forego their Interest, rather than wrong their Consciences? Is it not their worthy Receiving? And what better Signs can there be of the Spiritual Health, and flourishing State and Condition of their Souls? Christ, in this Sacrament, doth not only communicate to them an empty Name, or a fruitless Title, but makes them fruitful Trees; and it must needs be so, *for they that be planted in the House of the Lord, shall flourish in the Courts of our God*, saith the Psalmist, Psal. xcii. 13.

II. Who, that seriously considers the Spiritual Judgment we have spoken of, must not deplore the Condition of abundance of nominal Christians, that receive unworthily? The Persons upon whom this Spiritual Judgment is executed, are not far from every one of us. To find them out, we need not send you to the Sands of *Africa*, nor to the *Lybian* Desarts, nor to *Barbarians*, nor to *Negro's* and *Americans*: No, these very Persons you may see and know at Home, and in the midst of our mixt Congregations. How many have I known, that have come to this Holy Sacrament, and, after that, have grown worse than ever? Their Drunkenness and Lewdness, their Selfishness and Covetousness, their

extravagant and ungodly Speeches and Actions, which before were but *Embrio's* and Infants, after Receiving, have become Giants and strong Men. What an Argument is this of their unworthy Receiving? What an Argument of God's Judgment? What an Argument that God hath withdrawn his Holy Spirit from them? What an Argument that they are left to the Power of the Devil? O that they were sensible what a Judgment this is! O that they knew what a fearful State this is! O that their Eyes were open to see, that they are in the very Suburbs of Destruction! O that the Veil were taken away, that they might behold the Death, the Ruin, the Misery, the Wrath, the Indignation of God they run into! O thou, that openest the Eyes of the Blind, and raisest them that are bow'd down, and loosest the Prisoners, open the Eyes of these unhappy Souls, that they may see the Precipice they stand upon, and turn back, and save themselves from this untoward Generation.

HK. Let us all very seriously believe, that our Souls are capable of Sicknefs, and Misery, and Death, as well as our Bodies. Indeed they cannot die, so as to cease, or to be annihilated; for they are not made of Earth, and Matter, and contrary Humours and Principles, as our Bodies are, but certainly they can die to God's Favour, and a Sense of Eternity. This Belief, if it be sound and strong, cannot but have a mighty Influence upon our Lives. If we believe this as we ought, with Apprehensions of the Danger we are in, we shall be as much afraid of Things that will cast our Souls into Sicknefs, or hurry them into Death and Misery, as we are afraid of going to a Pest-house, where People lie languishing under their Plague-Sores. Ah! sinful Man, how could'st thou neglect coming to the Supper of the Lord, if thou didst believe, that this Neglect will  
bring



bring a Consumption on thy Soul? How couldst thou receive with an impenitent Heart, if thou didst believe, that thy Impenitence will kill thy Soul? How durst thou venture on those Sins, that are Poison and Venom to thy Soul? How could thou be so careless of the approaching Judgment of God; if thou didst believe that this Carelessness will infallibly bring a Palsie upon thy Soul? How could sinful Delights be so charming to thee, if thou didst believe, that they will throw thy Soul into a violent Fever? Why shouldst thou make thy Soul sick, when the great Physician offers thee Health and Salvation? The Sickness of thy Soul is much harder to be cur'd, than the most chronical Distemper of the Body. Not but that God can heal it, as easily as the other, and need say no more, than *Christ* to the *Paralytick* in the Gospel, *Arise, take up thy Bed, and walk*, and thou art presently whole; but he will not, except thou be willing too. This thy spiritual Sickness is wilful, that makes *Christ* backward to remove it; and if ever thy Soul be cur'd, it must cost thee great Mortifications, Rivers of Tears, strong Throws, and Agonies, and Troubles in the inward Man. And who would make Work for such a costly and laborious Cure, that may be well without it? Let the Physician be never so skilful, if the Patient will not follow his Prescriptions, what Hopes can there be of his Recovery? If thou were but willing to follow *Christ's* Prescriptions, thy Cure might be effected, even after thou hast brought thy Soul to the Mouth of the Pit, and to the Brink of the Grave; and if you ask me what these Prescriptions are, I must tell you, that they are these following.

1. *Like new-born Babes, to imbibe the sincere Milk of the Word, that you may grow thereby, if so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious; to whom coming, as to a living Stone, disallow'd indeed of Men, but chosen of*

God, and precious; ye also, as lively Stones, are built up a spiritual House, an holy Priesthood, to offer up spiritual Sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ, 1 Pet. ii. 2, 3, 4. Weak and sickly Persons have need of Milk; we use it in Bodily Diseases, when they have weaken'd the Body; and, it seems, it's necessary also for the Recovery of Souls, weaken'd by Sin; but then the Milk is not such as Cows, and Sheep, and Goats do give; but it is the Word of the Lord which endures for ever; and to apply our selves to pondering, and meditating in it, and to make it the Rule of our Life and Manners, is drinking of that Milk.

2. To pull out the right Eye, and to cut off the right Hand, Matth. v. 19, 30. i. e. To shun those Looks and Actions which are Provocations to Sin. As he, that means to recover of bodily Sickness, must avoid all Things that would irritate the morbidick Matter; so he, whose Soul is sick, and would be cur'd, must carefully avoid the Occasions of those Sins which have made him sick; and he that would be drunk no more, must avoid the Company that us'd to persuade him to Intemperance; and he that would be tempted no more by the Harlot that drew him in, must not come near her House, Prov. v. 8.

3. Not to repine at the bitter Draughts Christ gives you to drink of; but to say, as he in his Agonies, *The Cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?* Joh. xviii. 11. Whether this bitter Cup be the Cup of Mortification, of Fasting, of Severities, of being reveng'd upon thy self, and of deep Humiliation, or the Cup of Bodily Affliction, if he bids you drink of it, it must be thankfully taken, else expect no Cure; and that which ought to encourage us to drink of it, is this, that this Bitterness will end at last in Sweetness unspeakable, and ineffable Consolations.

4. To sell all with the Merchant in the Gospel, to get the Pearl of Price, *i. e. God's Love and Favour* Matth. xiii. 45, 46. The Meaning is, nothing must come in Competition with the great Concern of your Salvation; nothing must be suffer'd to be laid in the Balance with eternal Happiness; whatever would prejudice that, must be rejected, and left to those that know not how to prize it; to secure that, all must be ventur'd; and if even Father and Mother should be the Tempters to discourage us from it, even their Friendship must be lost, and all that we expected from them, counted unworthy to be compar'd with the Glory which ere long shall be reveal'd in us.

*The P R A Y E R.*

**M**OST glorious God, and Father of our Lord *Jesus Christ*! Heaven is thy Throne, and the Earth is thy Foot-stool: Where is the House that Man can build unto thee? and where is the Place of thy Rest? Thou dwellest not in Temples made with Hands! yet in an humble, sound, sincere, and pure Heart, thou hast promis'd to fix thy Habitation. Oh, that my Heart were so! When shall I be rid of my vain, foolish, wicked, and dangerous Thoughts? Oh! when wilt thou purge and cleanse this House from the Rubbish which annoys it? When wilt thou adorn my Soul with profound Humility, which may be an Invitation of thy gracious Presence? How apt am I to look off from thee! How apt to mind poor transitory Things! How little am I acquainted with that Fervency of Spirit which I see in others! Great Physician!

D d 4



Physician! Heal thou me: Thou hast healed Thousands; Oh! let me be one of that Number. It may be, of all that Multitude, there was none so miserable as I am; yet no Spots, no Stains are too hard for thee to wash out. I have delighted in my Filthiness, and, with the Swine, taken Pleasure in the Mire. Oh! let me consider how nobly I am born, and hate that mean and servile Spirit! I am born of God; so thy Apostle tells me. Oh! let my God be ever in my Heart, and let me do God-like Things, even Things that savour of Heaven, and a supernatural Temper. Touch my Soul, sweet *Jesu!* Touch it with the Rays of thy Favour in this Sacrament, that I may seek after thee alone, think on thee alone, and love thee alone. Chase away all sinful Sickness from me, and make me sick of Love; that joyfully, without Tedioufness, I may continue in well-doing. Thou art a Saviour! Be thou so to me, and save me from my Sins. Give me an healthful Soul, a good Conscience, and a sound Mind, and Purity of Heart; and with that Purity, frequent rejoicing in thy Name, Tranquility of Spirit, Multitude of holy Thoughts, Innocence of Life, ardent Love, and everlasting Charity. Let no Temptations defile me, but let these rather purge, and join, and unite me to thee. Give me a constant Zeal for thine Honour and Glory, and let me be for ever delighted with thy Praises. *Amen,*

*Amen.*



C H A P.

## C H A P. XXI

Of Damnation, which the unworthy Receiver  
eats and drinks to himself.

## The C O N T E N T S.

The Word made use of by St. Paul, in threatening unworthy Receivers, is ambiguous, on purpose to fright them from Sin. How Men eat and drink their Damnation in this holy Sacrament. The Justice of God in inflicting Damnation on unworthy Receivers, vindicated. The threatening of Damnation being denounc'd by St. Paul to the prophane Corinthians, that came drunk to this holy Ordinance; how that can be apply'd to sinful Men in this Age, who are not in a Possibility of coming drunk to the Lord's Table, since the Eucharist is with us administer'd and receiv'd in the Morning, and most of those who come, do come with some Preparation. Whence it comes that Damnation doth not fright Men more, it being the greatest Misery Man is capable of. The Severity of this Threatening puts Communicants in Mind, what a Value and Esteem they are to have for the Death of Christ: Yet it is no just Discouragement from approaching with sincere Desires and Resolutions to become conformable to Christ Jesus. The Prayer.

I. **T**HE Judgment the unworthy Receiver pulls upon himself, is not only temporal, but eternal too. To this End, I have already told you, that the Word *Kρίμα*, used by the Apostle, in his Threatening

Threatening denounc'd against unworthy Receivers, signifies not only Judgment in general, but also Damnation. And, indeed, the holy Ghost doth purposely make use sometimes of ambiguous Words, especially in Threatenings, to rouse Men the more from their Slumber, and to give them Notice, that if the lesser Punishment, threaten'd in the Expression, is either delay'd, or cannot prevail, that then the greater, included in the same Word, shall take Place. Thus the Word *Sheol*, in the *Old Testament*, us'd much in Threatenings, import both the *Grave*, and *Hell*; and in Comminations against wicked Men, it doth not only signify an untimely Grave, but a far greater Punishment beyond it, even *eternal Darkness*, and everlasting Howlings; to shew, that if the former Danger cannot fright, the latter shall, when it is too late to repent. And so here, the Word *Κεῖμα*, including both temporal Judgment, and Damnation, we must believe, the *Apostle* hath some farther Prospect than this present Life; and that he uses the Word, not only to terrify the unworthy Receiver with Sickness and Weakness of the Body, and a spiritual and temporal Judgment; but at the same Time bids him take heed, that in case any of the former doth not, for Reasons best known to Providence, light upon him; or in case the Thoughts of the former do not work upon him, and transform him into a better Man, he doth not run himself into Hell-fire, and eternal Misery: It is plainly to tell him, that since the Word includes both Judgments, temporal and eternal, he hath no Reason to flatter himself, that it will be only a temporal Judgment; but may justly fear, he shall incur God's everlasting Indignation. And therefore our Church retains both Significations of the Word, in her Exhortation before the Sacrament: **So is the Danger great, if we receive the same unworthily; for then we**

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are guilty of the Body and Blood of Christ our Saviour, we eat and drink our own Damnation, not considering the Lord's Body; we kindle God's Wrath against us, we provoke him to plague us with divers Diseases, and sundry kinds of Death.

II. How an unworthy Communicant *eats and drinks Damnation to himself*, is the next Thing we are to explain. And this he doth this following Way:

1. *He makes himself obnoxious to the fierce Anger of the Judge* that is to decide the Controversy of his Life and Death to all Eternity; and this Judge is the Son of God Christ Jesus; who hath protelted, that *Not every one who saith unto him, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven; but he that doth the Will of his Father which is in Heaven; and therefore will say unto them in the last Day, I know you not; depart from me, ye workers of Iniquity.* And there is nothing more certain, than that the unworthy Receiver is resolv'd not to do the Will of his Father which is in Heaven; whose Will is, that Men *should honour the Son, as they do the Father*, John v. 23. i. e. believe in him, as they do in the Father; and come to this Sacrament, like Persons redeem'd from their vain Conversation, resolv'd to war against the Lusts of the Flesh, like Soldiers of the Cross; and to remember the Death of the Son of God here with that Respect and Devotion they owe to God; resolv'd to live and die with him, like Persons who have lifted themselves under his Colours, with an Intent to fight against his Enemies; and to take heed they do not dishonour the Son of God, *by an evil Heart of Unbelief, in departing from the Living God.* This is the Will of God; and since Christ, the Judge of the World, is the Person appointed to examine, whether this Will of God hath been obey'd, the unworthy Receiver,

-Receiver, dying in Impenitence, and coming before him, and it appearing that he hath nothing less than the Will of God, profess'd, indeed, that he would do it, pretended Service and Obedience to him, and yet done his own Will, though exhorted and mov'd to do the Will of God by numberless Arguments, Arguments big with the greatest Charms; what can his Obstinacy cause, but Anger in the Judge, Anger implacable, since he would continue dead and unconcern'd under the lively Oracles of Heaven, and under the most lively Representations of the Love of God? The Effect of which Anger, is, the Sentence of everlasting Condemnation; *Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting Fire, &c. Matth. xxv. 41.* And for this Reason, the Psalmist calls to all, *Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the right Way; when his Anger shall be kindled but a little, Psal. ii. 11.*

12. He puts himself in the same State and Condition, that other ungodly Sinners are in; to whom is reserv'd the Blackness of Darknes for ever: And that State and Condition is wilful Disobedience to the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. And what the Consequence of this State is, St. Paul explains, *2 Thess. i. 7, 8, 9. The Lord Jesus shall be reveal'd from Heaven, with his mighty Angels in flaming Fire; taking Vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ; who shall be punish'd with everlasting Destruction from the Presence of the Lord, and from the Glory of his Power.* And that this is the unworthy Receiver's Condition, is manifest from hence; because he knows not God, i. e. he will not know him, nor obey the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. He might know that God is an holy God, and hath call'd him to Holiness, and is not to be put off with blind, lame, and slovenly Devotion; and yet he will not, nor doth he obey the Gospel, which obliges him, by Virtue of the Grace of God appearing to all Men,

Men, to renounce Ungodliness and worldly Lusts. This Ungodliness, and these worldly Lusts, he retains, and cherishes, and makes much of, notwithstanding his coming to the Lord's Table; and so putting himself in the same State and Condition that other ungodly Men are in, no wonder if he makes himself liable to the same Damnation.

3. *He makes himself fit Company for the Damn'd, and the Sufferers in Hell.* Those that are in that miserable State, did as he doth; and he doth as they did. They suffer'd the Profits and Pleasures of the World to juggle out a serious Sense of Religion; so doth the unworthy Receiver. They had a *Form of Godliness*, and deny'd the Power thereof; so doth he. They, some of them at least, came to this Sacrament with unmortify'd Lusts, with unsubdu'd Passions of Anger and Pride, and with ungovernable Desires after the World, and had no real Intent to become Profelytes of Righteousness; so doth he. They did not think that the holy Sacrament was such an Inforcive to a Change of Life, as Divines talk'd of; so doth he. They made no great Matter of this Ordinance, but thought it expedient to comply with the Custom of the Country, and the Usages of the Church they liv'd in, and that was all; and so doth he. They made nothing of promising and breaking their solemn Promises to God; no more doth he: And being like them in Manners, no wonder if he be like them in Torments too: Being their Companion in their Sins, 'tis just he should be a Companion with them in their Misery: Having been their Associate in Hypocrisy, 'tis fit he should have his Portion with Hypocrites.

III. But here the Sinner, I know, will be apt to clamour, and say, What Justice can there be in it, that God, for eating a Piece of Bread, and for drinking



a few Drops of Wine irreverently and unworthily, without observing some Punctilio's, and nicer Rules of Divinity, should inflict eternal Damnation upon a poor Creature? To which I answer:

1<sup>st</sup>. Every supreme and absolute Law-giver hath Liberty to set what Penalties he thinks fit upon the Breaches of his Law. If he will appoint a Punishment that is very dreadful, for a certain Offence, the Interest of the Subject is to keep the Law, not to quarrel with the Sanction. At this rate, a Man might plead, What great Matter is there in opening a Window at Night, to get into an House, to steal some small inconsiderable Thing in the House? And shall this be made *Felony without Benefit of the Clergy*? All wise Law-givers have their Reason, why they inflict severe Penalties upon Offenders; and 'tis fit that an Infinite Majesty should both threaten and appoint Punishments suitable to his Grandeur. Where the Law, and the Sanction of it, is sufficiently known, Men do not accuse the Law-giver of Cruelty, if the Offender runs himself into Danger; but rather blame the senseless and foolish Man, who, knowing the Severity of the Sanction, might have easily deny'd himself in his sinful Purchase, and secur'd his Life and Welfare: And the less the Fault is, for which a severe Punishment is appointed, the more easily might it have been avoided; and not to avoid it, when the Forbearance was so easy, is an Argument of strange Presumption; so that the Contempt and Presumption are so severely punish'd, and not the Fault it self. Let us apply this to the Case in Hand: The supreme Law-giver thinks fit to inflict Damnation on the unworthy Receiver. Either this unworthy Receiving is a very little Sin, or a very great one: If a great one, the Punishment cannot be thought too great; for it is proportion'd to the Greatness of the Authority which is despis'd, and to the infinite and incomprehensible Mercy which is slight-  
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ed; not to mention, that unworthy Receiving is a Complication of many Sins, and more than one go into the Composition: If it be little, it is more easily shunn'd; and then the Presumption comes to be very great, and that Presumption is justly punish'd with great Severity. Besides, Who can judge so well of the Contempt, and the Heinousness of it, as he that knows all Things, and can best judge how great the Indignity is which is offer'd to God in the Sin? Nay, the Greatness of the Penalty discovers the Greatness of the Impiety; the Foulness of the Crime, the deep Dye of the Transgression, and the dangerous Tendency of the Offence. A Christian, from the Greatness of the Penalty, is to conclude, there must be more in the Sin, than appears to his Eyes; and to infer, that if the Offence were not greater than ordinary, so severe a Penalty would not have been laid upon it. So that, at the same Time, the Greatness of the Punishment serves to fright the Sinner from continuing in his Sin, against he comes next to the Table of the Lord, and is a strong Engagement to him, to take nobler Resolutions, to come with greater Reverence, and with better Purposes, that he may escape Damnation.

2dly. That which makes the Penalty just, is the Reason the Apostle gives, 1 Cor. xi. 29. *Because he discerns not the Lord's Body.* And what is it, not to discern the Lord's Body?

1. The unworthy Receiver discerns not, that the Bread and Wine in this Ordinance, set apart for an holy Use, and consecrated by the Words of Institution, represents the Body and Blood of the Son of God; which Consideration should over-awe him into the greatest Reverence and Devotion. He considers not that by laying his Hands upon the Body of the Son of God, he vows Faith and Allegiance to him; and therefore, refusing that Faith and Allegiance in his Actions, is suppos'd to look upon that Bread as common

mon, which God hath made representative of the greatest Mystery. He considers not, that by eating of this Bread, his Soul, at the same Time, pretends to feed on the Body of *Jesus Christ*, and to apply the Mercies and Benefits of his Death; whereby he brings himself under an Obligation to live as a Member of *Christ's* mystical Body; not according to the Lusts of the Flesh, but according to the Will of him that bought him at so great a Price. And being at the same Time unresolv'd to do so, he mocks the Lord *Jesus Christ*, and plays with Vows made in a Place where Angels give their Attendance.

2. He discerns not, he considers not what it is, for God to take a Body upon him for a poor Sinner's Sake, to redeem him from Damnation. For God to take a Body upon him, is a Thing so astonishing, so miraculous, that if the greatest Prince of the World should voluntarily make himself a Beggar, and wallow in Dirt and Slime, to deliver a Slave out of Prison in a Foreign Country, it is not so much, nor a Thing of that great Consequence. For God to take a Body upon him, that he might die for the Sinner, and make him capable of inheriting everlasting Bliss, is a Mercy which runs so high, that Reason is at a Loss, and it is enough to make the Mind grow giddy at the Consideration; and, consequently, it is so great an Engagement to devote our selves to the Service of that God who hath done this, that no Obligation can be thought greater, or more likely to prevail with Men of common Sense and Ingenuity. And therefore, for the unworthy Receiver not to discern or consider this, must be a Contempt that is without a Parallel.

3. He considers not, that it is the Body of his Lord and Master that is present in the Figure, in this Ordinance; even the Body of that Lord, whose Servant he is, and owns himself to be. He discerns not, that in eating of the holy Bread, he acknowledges *Christ*



*Jesus* to be his Lord and Master, at whose Beck he means to run, by whose Command he intends to act, and by whose Will he designs to be rul'd. So that the unworthy Receiver runs himself into strange Contradictions; he acknowledges, at the Receiving of the *Eucharist*, that *Christ* is his Lord and Master, and yet is not willing to be govern'd by his Laws; his Lust and sinful Desires still continue his Masters; the Devil is still his Master; the *World* is still his Master, and Sin still reigns in his mortal Body; *Christ* is only his Master in *Shew*, these in good Earnest; he in Complement, these in sober Sadness: And when this Contempt hath all these Aggravations in it, who can complain that God is unjust in inflicting Damnation on the unworthy Receiver, if he turns not?

IV. But still they were only the *prophane Corinthians*, against whom this Judgment is denounc'd; Men who came drunk to this holy Sacrament: And since no Body in this Age can be presum'd or suppos'd to come in such a Posture to this Sacrament, why should the Penalty mention'd by *St. Paul*, be enforc'd upon Men now living, who are not guilty of the same Sin, and in no Possibility almost of committing it, i. e. of coming drunk and disguis'd to the Lord's Table? To which I answer,

I. Not to mention that *Whatever Things are written afore-time; are written for our Learning*, 'tis a great Mistake, that the Apostle restrains the Penalty to being drunk with Wine, or any other strong Liquor, in the Use of this Ordinance. He applies it not only to this Sin, but also to want of Self-Examination, and not to discern the Lord's Body; as will appear to any Man that compares the 28th and 29th Verses in that Chapter: I mean, the 11th of the *First Epistle* to the *Corinthians*. And besides, though their coming drunk

to this Sacrament, gives Occasion to the Discourse, yet he makes a general Inference or Conclusion; *He that, or Whosoever eats and drinks unworthily, eats and drinks Damnation to himself.* So that if there be more Ways of unworthy Receiving, than coming drunk to this Ordinance, it will follow, that they only come under the Reach of this Penalty.

2. If one wilful Sin, or Sin allow'd of, or Sin of Temper, Custom, or Inclination, which a Man is not heartily resolv'd to strive against, makes him an unworthy Receiver, another must be suppos'd to do the same; for all Sins allow'd of, are of the same Nature, though the Object be chang'd: And therefore, whether a Man be loth or unresolv'd to part with his drunken Cups, or unresolv'd to mortify his Envy, or Malice, or Pride, or Hatred, or revengeful Desires, or opprobrious Language, or Injustice, or Cheating, or Lying, &c. the Change of the Object makes no Alteration in the unworthy Receiving; and therefore no Alteration in the Penalty. If a *Corinthian Christian*, that profess'd himself a Member of Christ's Church, had come drunk to the Lord's Table to Day, and come again in the same Posture, and in the same Disguise, the *Lord's Day* following, there is no Dispute of it, but coming again with the same Sin upon his Back, would have made himself an unworthy Receiver: And if not parting with a known Sin, against he came next, made him an unworthy *Communicant*, it stands to Reason, that he who is given to Lying, and to Cheating, or to any other known Sin, and comes to the Sacrament without a full Purpose to reform it, draws the same Guilt upon himself that the prophane *Corinthians* did. 'Tis true, coming with the Guilt of other Sins allow'd of, is not so scandalous a Thing as coming drunk; but with respect to God, who is offended by it, and against whose Laws the Sin is committed, they are  
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of the same Nature with coming *disguis'd*, or *drunk*, to the Lord's Table; and therefore such Men are liable to the same Penalty.

3. Though a vicious Person in this Age, cannot well come drunk to this Sacrament, because it is commonly receiv'd in the Morning, and most Men make some little Preparation, and approach sober, yet he may come drunk with evil Habits of Sin; and then he comes drunk with evil Habits, when he is so besotted with the Sins which Custom or Company, or something else, hath made sweet, and easy, and pleasant to him, that whatever is feign'd and pretended, as to general Purposes, to mend his Life before he receives, yet he is not heartily resolv'd to part with such particular Sins as he is very prone to; and all the Love and Charity set before him in the Lord's Supper, cannot work in him a Change of Mind, or an unfeign'd Resolution to use the proper Means to shake off the Sin which is become natural to him: And whether a Man come to the Sacrament drunk in a natural Sense, or drunk in a spiritual Sense; whether he come to it drunk with Wine, or drunk with Sin, there is no great Difference in the Crime, the Sin is still the same; especially since all those who lay Claim to the Promise of Pardon and Salvation, are peremptorily commanded to *cleanse themselves from all Filthiness, both of Flesh and Spirit*, 2 Cor. vii. 1.



*The preceding Consideration reduc'd to Practice.*

**H**ERE I cannot but take Notice, how little the Things which are not seen with our bodily Organs, though of the greatest Consequence, are minded by the Generality, even those that pretend to believe them. Damnation is certainly the most dreadful Thing imaginable; yet most Men make so little of it, that the Fear of losing twenty or thirty Pounds, discomposes and disorders them more than the Apprehension that they shall lose the Light of God's Countenance for ever. What can we imagine to be the Reason of it? Surely it must be because it is not seen: And therefore People do not heartily believe it, nor seriously think of it. And yet, when a Thing is very certain, that God hath spoke it, and we have all the Assurances that the Thing is capable of, that it is so, though it cannot be seen with the Eyes of Flesh; yet being certain, the Thoughts of it surely might affect, and work upon, and discompose the Soul in a manner as much as Sight and Sense. But here lies the Misery; the greatest Part of Men are unthinking Animals; they believe, but think not; they think, but not of that which concerns them most. This makes Damnation only a big Word to set off a violent Passion, but it frights not; nay, is so far from frightening, that not a few do barbarously wish it to their own Souls; yet still, not only Faith, but Reason saith, there is such a Thing; and the Justice of a supreme Being, requires so much: So that he that will be frightened with Damnation, must first deliberately examine the Reasons which may convince him of the Being and Reality of it, and then reflect and ruminate upon the Terror and Consequences of it: And if this be done, and the Divine Assistance, which must co-operate with all spiritual Endeavours, to make them effectual, be heartily

heartily implor'd; Sin, Vanity, and Lust, and foolish Desires, must necessarily fall, and hint before it, and a Change of Life cannot but follow; and a Man's Carefulness to please God, must needs be the happy Consequences of it,

II. The Penalty God inflicts upon unworthy Receivers, shews how God would have us value and esteem what he hath done for us in *Christ Jesus*. The Death of *Christ* for poor Sinners, God looks upon to be so great a Thing, that he expects that every Soul, upon hearing of it, and sufficient Demonstration of the Truth of it, should be so surpriz'd with the Mercy, as immediately to throw off the Works of Darkness, and put off the old Man, with all his deceitful Lusts, and to become an obedient Subject of *Christ's* Kingdom. God sets that high Value upon it, that he expects that every Soul, to whom the News comes, immediately lay Force upon the Kingdom of Heaven, rejoyce that he is made capable of Pardon, and an Inheritance incorruptible; and for the Glory set before him, fall to work; and seek first the Kingdom of God, and the Righteousness thereof: And therefore, for any Person who professes himself a Christian, to entertain this Message coldly, lazily, and with Indifferency, is an Act so unworthy, so derogatory from the Sublimity and Excellency of the Favour, that we need not wonder if he lashes this low, slavish, and pitiful Temper of ours with the severest Vengeance. Can we think, because we have no extraordinary Esteem of the Mercy, that God will set light by it because we do? Oh! let us entertain it with the profoundest Respect, and the deepest Veneration; and think our selves the happiest Creatures living, that we have this Act of Divine Bounty and Charity reveal'd to us. But then, it is impossible we should think our selves so, except we walk worthy of the glorious News, and transcribe on our

Lives the glorious Zeal, and Fervour, and Sincerity of the Apottles, and primitive Believers.

III. As this severe Threatening denounc'd against unworthy Receivers, is the strongest Disswasive possible, from eating and drinking unworthily, so it is no just Discouragement to receive with sincere Desires, and Resolutions to become conformable to Christ's Holiness. God frights from sinning, not from doing well; from wronging our own Souls, not from Endeavours to save them; from Impenitence, not from true Repentance. All that is to be done, *Christian*, in this Sacrament, in order to receiving worthily, is, to lay and prostrate thy self at the Feet of *Jesus*, and to cry, *Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? Speak, Lord, for thy Servant hears.* Such humble Souls escape the Danger, and may be confident of a gracious Look from the King of Saints. But then, if we fall down before the Throne and the Lamb, and make this Profession, let it come from the Heart, and let our Tongues speak what our Minds think, and our Wills mean to stand to: And let our Desires to be one with him, be such as Simplicity dictates, lest our Hearts and Tongues not going together, we may be found Lyars, and fall into Condemnation; and, oh that every unworthy Receiver would consider what Damnation means! Consider it, thou dull and careless Man; and then tell me, whether Christ requires any Thing unreasonable of thee to prevent it? Thou that runnest from an House on fire, and from a Land-flood, or Deluge, that threatens to overwhelm thee, wilt not thou do all thou can'st to escape Damnation, that Deluge of God's Wrath, and that Fire of his Anger, which no Man can quench? Should this Damnation be thy Portion at last, we may easily imagine what thy Wishes will be? The same that all inconsiderable Souls are very full of, when they have ruin'd and undone themselves: *Oh, that I had been wise*



*wise before the Fact, and come to the Lord's Table with a better Frame; put on the Lord Jesus, and made his Virtues and Graces my Study, my Delight, and my Pattern! But these are the Wishes of Fools: And I did not think it would come to this Pass, is a Saying which we look upon as a Character of a weak and childish Understanding. Both he that receives unworthily, and he that never receiv'd yet, both have yet Opportunity to turn from their evil Ways. Therefore, Seek ye the Lord while he is to be found; call ye upon him while he is near. Let the Wicked forsake his Way, and the unrighteous Man his Thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have Mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon. Isa. lv. 6, 7.*

*The P R A Y E R.*

**O** Lord, Great and Incomprehensible! Slow to Anger, and Great in Power; and who wilt not at all acquit the Wicked! Thy Way is in the Whirlwind, and in the Storm; and the Clouds are the Dust of thy Feet. Thou rebukest the Sea, and makest it dry, and dryest up mighty Rivers. The Mountains quake at thy Word, and the Hills melt, and the Earth is burnt at thy Presence; yea, the World, and all they that dwell therein. Who can stand thine Indignation? And who can abide the Fierceness of thine Anger; where thy Fury is pour'd out like Fire, and the Rocks are thrown down by thine Arm? Who would not fear thee, O thou Great Preserver of Men! Yet thou, Lord, art good, and a strong Hold in the Day of Trouble; and thou knowest them that trust in thee. In my Ap-

proaches to thy holy Table, let me so reflect upon thy Mercy, as not to forget thy Justice. Let me so look upon thy Friendship, as to cast an Eye withal upon thy Severity to thine Enemies. Thou offer'st me thy Friendship in this Ordinance: How great is thy Goodness! Oh, let me entertain the Offer with Admiration! God will dwell with simple Man, and therefore requires a Temple; a Temple not made with hewn Stones, not of polish'd Marble, not of painted Walls; but of living and shining Gems, and of such golden Ornaments as Rust cannot touch, and Dust cannot blacken; a Temple purify'd with the Fire of Love, trimm'd with an holy Conversation, and deck'd with Variety of Virtues. Make my Soul, I beseech thee, such a Temple, and come and fix thy Tents here for ever. Thou art the Judge to whom I am accountable for my Receiving. Let me remember, that as thou didst rain down *Manna* from Heaven upon thy People, so thou didst rain down Fire and Brimstone too upon *Sodom* and *Gomorrab*. Let me so rejoyce in the Mercies thou rainest down upon me in this Sacrament, as to fear thy Judgments in Case I abuse those Mercies. If of every idle Word Man shall give an Account in the Great Day, what Account will they have to give of prophaning this sublime and mysterious Ordinance? If the Dust of thy Apostles Feet shall bear Witness in that Day against the Obstinate and Impenitent, what a Witness will the Body of the Son of God be against those who would not be warm'd with the Sight and Contemplation of it  
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into Virtue? Let these Things sink deep into my inward Parts, and teach me so to triumph in thy Praise, as to tremble at thy Presence! Yet, oh, let not my Goodness be the Effect of a slavish Fear of Damnation, so much as of Love and Delight in thy holy Ways! Let Kindness do more with me, than Terror; and let my Heart melt more with the Sight of thy Condescension, than with the Sight of thy flaming Sword. Teach me to serve thee with Pleasure and Affection; and let the Glory of thy Name be the End of all my holy Exercises. Let thy Love be ever fix'd in my Heart; and be thou my Rest, my Tranquility, my Peace, my Meat, my Drink, my Food, my Treasure, my Possession, and my Portion, for ever, thro' Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*





## C H A P. XXII.

Of Preparation ; and first, Of Meditation of  
Christ's Passion.

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*Preparation for this holy Sacrament, reduc'd to five Heads.*  
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I. **H**AVING in the foregoing Chapters explain'd the  
Doctrine, Nature, Use, End, and Design of  
this holy Sacrament, it will be necessary to direct the  
pious Soul in her Preparations for this blessed Ordinance.  
And this Preparation may be said to comprehend,

I. Medi-

1. Meditation of Christ's Passion, with Reflections on our selves.
2. Self-Examination.
3. Judging our selves.
4. Self-Resignation.
5. Devotion suitable to the Occasion.

I begin with Meditation of Christ's Passion, call'd by *Damian*, The Believer's Refuge in the Hour of Temptation, his Shade in the Heat and Sweat of Afflictions, the everlasting Fuel of Divine Love, and the best Sauce or Remedy in all Troubles and Vexations. And Christ himself seems to have shewn us an Example of seasoning our Hearts with his previous Meditations, for before he instituted this Sacrament, before he distributed the Bread and Wine to the Disciples in the Eucharist, he contemplates his own Sufferings in the Paschal Lamb he eat of. He saw on the Table a Lamb dead, flea'd, and roasted at the Fire: This suggested to him, how himself was, in a few Hours after, to be kill'd, and scourg'd, and feel the Heat and Fire of mighty Torments. He saw his Friends eat the Paschal Lamb in haste, and he could not but reflect what haste his Enemies would make to apprehend him. In the unleaven'd Bread, and the bitter Herbs that were set before him, he saw the Gall and Vinegar he was to taste; and if the Disciples, at that Time, did eat the Passover with Staves in their Hands, that could not but put him in Mind of the Cross to which he was to be nail'd.

II. What it is that makes Meditation of Christ's Passion, necessary, as an Act of Preparation for this holy Sacrament, we shall easily know, if we consider,

1. Meditation brings Things to our Minds, we did not think of before. Though we know before, that Christ

Christ was unjustly accus'd by the Jews, beaten, buffeted, crown'd with Thorns, inhumanly murth'r'd; yet Meditation discovers Things to us, we took no great Notice of before; it helps us to enlarge upon the Passages of his Passion; and these cannot but be very instructive to our Minds. This puts us in mind of the Dignity of the Person that suffer'd all this; how it was not a mere Man, not a mortal King, not an Angel, not one of the higher Orders of ministering Spirits, but the Son of God, that laid down his Life; a Life more precious than the Lives of all created Beings put together. This puts us in mind of the Indignity of the Persons for whom he suffer'd, what vile Creatures they were, Creatures of whom he could expect no Advantage, and fear no Danger, and such as were his Enemies. This puts us in mind of the vast Multitude of his Troubles and Miseries, how his Body did not only suffer, but his Soul too; how he suffer'd in his Habit and Dress, by having it pull'd off from him, and divided among the ruder Soldiers; how he suffer'd in his Honour and Reputation, by being call'd a Glutton, a Wine-bibber, a Blasphemer, stirring up the People, and possess'd with a Devil; how he suffer'd in his Wisdom, by being call'd Impostor, and treated like a Fool, and mad Man; how he suffer'd in his Power, by being accus'd as a Magician, as one that dealt with a Familiar, and was in League with the Prince of Devils; how all Sorts of Persons did contribute to his Suffering; a Disciple, whom he had nourish'd, and brought up in the Nurture and Admonition of the Lord, Kings, and Governors, Judges, Harlots, Soldiers, High-Priests, Scribes, Pharisees, Ecclesiasticks, Seculars, Jews, and Gentiles, Men and Women. This puts us in mind how every Member of his Body was put to grievous Pain; how his Head was crown'd with Thorns, his Hair pluck'd off by the rude Usage he endur'd, his Cheeks beaten, his Face sully'd, his Back crush'd,

his



his Neck and Arms ty'd with Cords, his Shoulders  
bruise'd by the Cross, his Hands and Feet pierc'd with  
Nails, his Side open'd with a Lance, and his whole  
Body made black and blue with Stripes; how all  
Senses suffer'd, his Eyes seeing the Mockeries of the  
Multitude, his Ears hearing the Blasphemies of his  
Enemies, his Smell forc'd to endure the Stench of  
dead Bodies on Mount *Calvary*, his Taste tormented  
with Thirst, and what is worse, with Gall; and  
his Feeling with Variety of Blows. This puts us in  
mind how his Soul endur'd more, far more yet, than  
his Senses, the Sins of Mankind lying like a heavy  
Load upon her: This represents how that was afflict-  
ed with a Sense of God's Anger against Sin, and with  
the Damnation of Thousands, that would not prevent  
their Ruin; and how, as the Sins of Mankind were  
without Number, so his Grief and Sorrow was with-  
out Measure. This puts us in mind, how his Pain  
and Torments became more pungent, and afflictive,  
by Reason of the Delicacy of his Complexion; how  
his Imagination being most lively, had therefore  
a quicker Sense of Misery; how his Torments were  
without any Alloy, differing in this Case from the  
Torments of the Martyrs of Old, who had great  
Comfort administer'd to them in their Sufferings;  
Comforts so powerful, that they walk'd on glowing  
Coals, as on a Bed of Roses, and in the midst of  
Flames, had a cooling Dew sprinkled upon them.  
This suggests how he drunk the bitter Cup without  
Mixture, without a drop of Honey to sweeten it;  
and how this makes him the Martyr of all Martyrs,  
and the King of all afflicted Saints; and upon that  
Account may be said to have endur'd more than all  
Men put together, ever suffer'd in this World. This  
puts us in mind, with what Affection he suffer'd; how  
he chose to suffer, for the Joy and Comfort he should  
thereby procure to all sincere Believers; how Love to  
Mens

Mens Souls engag'd him to these Sufferings; and whereas a few Drops of his Blood might have serv'd Turn, to redeem Mankind, he would, notwithstanding all this, to testify his infinite Love, shed every Drop of Blood in his Body for their sakes. This puts us in mind with what Fervency and Earnestness he went to meet his Cross, and in order thereunto, bid the Traytor make haste, and do quickly what he design'd to do; and with what Alacrity he embrac'd his Torments; and therefore sung a Hymn with his Disciples, before he was apprehended by the Murtherers, to shew the Joy he took in laying down his Life for his Sheep. Meditation doth the Painter's Work, which embellishes the courser Draught, gives it Features, Lineaments, curious Strokes, and all its proper Dresses, whereby the Mind is signally edify'd, and affected with the Picture.

2. Meditation of Christ's Passion, enflames the Soul with the Love of Jesus. At *Patras*,

*P. Jean. Bapt. de St. Jure de la Connois, & del' amour de nostre Seign. Liv. 1. Sect. 2.*

a City of *Achaia*, there liv'd a Heathen Priest, *Corefus* by Name, who, intending to marry, set his Affections upon one *Callirrhoe*, a Virgin of that Town, whom he courted, and lov'd entirely; but the more he courted her, the more refractory she was, 'till she even abus'd him, and reproach'd him, and shut the Door against him. The Priest seeing no Way to compass his Designs, consults his Oracle, and Idol, but receives no Answer. In the mean While, a killing Sickness seiz'd the Town, a Distemper which made People mad, and die raving. The Evil being become universal, and spreading daily more and more, some of the chief Men of the Town resolve to send an Embassy to one of the Heathen Gods in another City, which gives them this Answer: That this Plague should not cease, 'till one *Callirrhoe*, a Virgin in that Town,

was offer'd in Sacrifice, or some Person for her. The News of the Oracle being noised about the Town, *Callirrhoe* goes to all her Friends, to see whether any would suffer for her, but finding none so fond, she prepares for Death, and coming forth at the Day appointed, dress'd in her Funeral Robes, *Corefus*, that was to be the Executioner, appears with his Sword to cut off her Head, for it was his Office upon such dreadful Solemnities; but as he is preparing to give the fatal Blow, his Bowels begin to yearn; and to destroy a Person whom he had lov'd with most cordial Affection, was so severe a Tryal to him, that rather than be guilty of so barbarous a Fact, in the Presence of the whole Assembly, he runs the drawn Sword into his own Bowels; and as the Blood was now issuing in Rivers from his Body, professes to the Damsel, that he dy'd for her; so sincere, so strong, so fervent was his Love. *Callirrhoe* astonish'd at the Sight, and confounded with the Enterprize, her stubborn Heart melts, and now would have sav'd his Life with her own, but it was too late; yet, to make him amends, her Love to him on a sudden grows so violent, that she resolv'd not to out-live him, and at the same Instant, made her Life a Sacrifice to bear him Company. Meditation of Christ's Passion, produces in a manner the same Effect, for as it represents Christ's dying for the stubborn Sinner, and dying for Love of him, it raises reciprocal Flames in the considerate Soul. It puts the Case, Suppose there should be a King, most wise, most rich, most potent, most beautiful, most gracious, in the very Flower of his Age, who being about to marry, should cast his Eyes and Love upon a poor Country Maid, his Subject, and withal very much deform'd, homely, ignorant, despis'd, and disregarded by the meanest Men, adorn'd with no good Quality, that should cause Attraction, and solemnly



solemnly marry her; *What an Obligation* would that be to that poor infirm Creature, advanc'd to a Throne from nothing, from worse than nothing, to entertain that Royal Husband with marvellous Respect, and to behave herself in his Presence with all possible Reverence, and Love, and Modesty, considering what she hath been, and what she is come to by his Means? *What an Obligation* to treat him with all Respect, Honour, and Humility? *What an Obligation* to love him with a most ardent, most tender, and most affectionate Love, and to be most true and faithful to him, loving none like him, who has deserv'd so much as her Hands? *What an Obligation* to commend and praise him, and to express her Sense of his unspeakable Favour to her? *What an Obligation*, when he is sick, to tend him, to be about his Bed, to declare her Sorrow, and Grief, and Compassion by her Tears, especially since he hath humbled himself beyond Example, to espouse her? *What an Obligation*, when he is absent, to speak of him, to long for him, and to be impatient for his Return? *What an Obligation* to sing his Virtues, his Condescension, his Mercy, and his Charity, and to magnify his Wisdom, his Goodness, his Beauty, and his Love to her? *What an Obligation* to give him Content in all Things, and to deport herself every where, so as to please him? *What an Obligation*, if she have committed the least Offence, to think of it with great Regret and Remorse, to beg his Pardon, and to implore his Mercy? *What an Obligation* to endure any Thing, any Trouble, any Cross, any Inconvenience for his Sake, and to think herself happy, that she is in a Capacity to suffer any Thing for his Name? *What an Obligation* to be entirely subject to him, and to yield to all Things he desires of her? Finally, *What an Obligation* to think herself most happy in his Love, and to rejoyce in being thus advanc'd by him, to a State she could never have wish'd,

wish'd, or hop'd for? Meditation having put this Case, applies it to the present Occasion, and saith; Thou, O my Soul, thou art that poor, despicable, contemptible Maid, that the Monarch of the Universe, the Wisest, the most Potent, the Greatest Prince in the World, did fall in Love with. There was no Beauty, no Wisdom, no good Qualities, no Perfection, no Amiability in Thee, for which he should think of thee for his Spouse, and that which surpasses all Admiration, this Sovereign Prince, this Prince of Princes, could not gain this wretched Maiden, but by enduring a thousand Torments, by spilling of his Blood, and hazarding his Life, and he freely and cheerfully sacrific'd himself to obtain thy Love. He requir'd no Dowry of thee, for he was infinitely Rich, and thou miserably Poor. He lov'd thee, not in a foolish Passion, for he is infinitely Wise. He chose thee, not for his Pleasure, for thou wert defiled to a Prodigy, and himself is happy, and was happy in himself, from all Eternity; nor did he marry thee by Force, for he is Omnipotent; but it was mere Love, mere Charity, mere Compassion, that he set his Affections upon thee; and by his marrying thee, he hath enabled thee, aggrandiz'd thy Fortune, made thee wise, and rich, and great, and beautiful; and hast not thou Reason to love him with all thy Heart, and with all thy Strength? And by such Meditations of Christ's Passion, the Soul is enflam'd with the Love of the Lord Jesus. Add to all this.

3. What can be a more proper Preparative for this Sacrament, wherein the Passion and Sufferings of our Lord are most solemnly remembred, than a previous Meditation of his Sufferings; for hereby the Soul will be more expedite in that Remembrance, and remember that Death, not only with greater Facility, but with greater Sense, and greater Affections too. It is so with Men, that are to speak in Publick, they premeditate what they are to say, and think much of the Thing they are to be upon when they come before the Assembly; and I see no Reason, but this may be a good Pre-

parative for acting in Publick too. Certainly, he that actuates his Faculties thus in Private, will be better able to exercise them in Publick; for hereby the Heart is season'd; and when it appears before God in this Ordinance, the Sense which the private Meditation hath left upon it, fits it the better for the Participation of Christ's Merits. This previous Meditation softens the Earth, makes it fit for the Master's Use, and for his sowing the good Seed of Grace in it, when the Soul comes into the Courts of the Lord. And as he that means to pray with good Attention in publick, must not forget his secret Prayers at Home; so, he that will reflect with Comfort on his Saviour's Death at Church, must meditate of it in his Closet. One helps the other; and if these go Hand in Hand together, it is the Way to put the Soul in an excellent Frame. These private Meditations are the Dresses of the Soul, she puts on at Home; that she may look more beautiful and amiable, when she comes to stand in her Bridegroom's Presence in the Temple.

III. How this Meditation is to be order'd, and manag'd, must be in a great Measure left to the Wisdom and Discretion of the Party concern'd; yet I should think, that the best Way would be to lay the holy *Evangelists* before us, who all have given us a very exact Account of their Master's Sufferings, especially in the last Scene of his Life here on Earth; and to make spiritual Reflections, either on the whole History in general, or on some of the principal Points contain'd in it. To give the Reader an Account of the Proposal, I will present him with a Scheme of *Meditations* on the XXIIId and XXIVth Chapters of St. *Luke's* Gospel; which I do the rather pitch upon, because I think this *Evangelist* hath given us the fullest Account of the Circumstances and Particulars of *Christ's* last Sufferings;



and I shall go from Verse to Verse, not so much to prescribe mine own Way, as to give the devout Reader an Hint, how he may improve those historical Passages, and enlarge upon them, according to the Gifts, Parts, and Abilities God hath given him.



The XXIIId Chapter of St. Luke's Gospel  
paraphras'd.

1. *Now the Feast of Unleaven'd Bread drew nigh,  
which is call'd the Passover.*

**B**Ehold, O my Soul! how busy the Jews are to remove all Leaven out of their Houses against the Passover! How loth hast thou been these many Years to remove the Leaven of Vanity out of thy Heart, when thou hast gone to meet thy blessed Redeemer? What Excuses hast thou fram'd? What Apologies hast thou made, that thou might'st not part with that Apple of thine Eye? What a Benjamin hath it been to thee? How unwilling hast thou been to quit it? Ungrateful Creature, canst thou name the Name of Christ, and keep that which will render that Name, and all the Sweets contain'd in it, unsavoury, and insipid to thee?

2. *And the Chief Priests and Scribes sought how they might kill him, for they fear'd the People.*

**A**ND hath not this been thy Case, O my Soul? Hast thou not fear'd Men more than God? Hast not thou been more afraid of Dust and Ashes,

than of the holy One of Israel? How often couldst thou have dispens'd with God's seeing thy Folly, if it could have been conceal'd from the Knowledge of Men? And when thou hast avoided and shun'd a Sin, hath it not been more for fear of blemishing thy Credit and Reputation in the World, than of Love to the Law of God? Hath not temporal Interest restrain'd thee from Sin, more than God's all-seeing Eye? Think how unkindly and unworthily thou hast dealt with thy best and greatest Friend, and act for the future upon nobler Principles.

3. *Then enter'd Satan into Judas, surnam'd Iscariot, being of the Number of the Twelve.*

O My Soul! tho' thou hast not been guilty of the formal Act of Judas's Crime, yet hast not thou too often open'd the Door to thy mortal Enemy? Hast not thou given him Invitations to enter into thee by carnal Security, and taking too great Liberty in thy Conversation? When thou hast left thy self without a Guard, and hast not watch'd over thy Senses, hath not this been an *Item* to the Serpent to creep into the Garden, and to hide himself among the Bushes? Nay, when thou hast given Way to his evil Suggestions, hugg'd his Temptations, and embrac'd the Evil he hath prompted thee to; when thou hast harbour'd Malice against thy Neighbour, when thy Heart hath swell'd with Pride, when thy Breast hath been fill'd with Envy, when thou hast delighted in Froth, and idle Talk; have not these been Signs of Satan's entering into thy Heart? When, in hearing the Word, in Prayer, and in other Devotions, thou hast admitted foolish, impertinent, frivolous Thoughts into thy Mind, and kept out Considerations suitable to the Duty thou

thou wert engag'd in; was not this to give the Devil Admittance into thy Bosom? And shall so dangerous a Guest lodge any longer there? Oh, bid him be gone, that thy House, and all thou hast, may be in Safety.

4. *And he went his Way, and commun'd with the Chief Priests and Captains, that he might betray him unto them.*

**A**ND what Pains hast thou taken, O my Soul, to betray thy blessed Redeemer, when thou hast join'd with his Enemies, the World, the Flesh, and the Devil; when thou hast lain in the World's Arms, and solac'd thy self with its airy Pleasures, in Despight of all Christ's Calls and Intreaties to the contrary? What hath thy living in Strife and Variance been, but a conspiring with the Devil, against the holy Jesus, that Prince of Peace? When thou hast been peremptory and resolute to satisfy the Lusts of the Flesh, and its inordinate Desires, hath not this been exposing the excellent Religion thou professest, to the Contempt and Scorn of Men? And how much doth this want of betraying thy Master that bought thee, and thy God who redeem'd thee?

5. *And they were glad, and covenanted to give him Money.*

**H**OW hast thou rejoyc'd in Sin, O my Soul! how hast thou been tickled with the Infinities and Reproaches of thy Neighbour! How merry hast thou been in ill Company! how glad when thou hast heard of the Fall or Trouble of a Person thou hast had a Grudge against! What Pleasure hast thou taken in fantastick Dresses, in following the



sinful Humours of vain Men, and gratifying thy foolish Lusts! How hast thou laugh'd when thou shouldst have mourn'd, and sported thy self with Actions that should have drawn Rivers of Tears from thine Eyes! How merry hast thou been among thy Cups! And how much more hath idle Talk, and sinful Lusts, and prophane Jest, rais'd and chear'd thy Spirits, than the most affectionate Sermon! What strange Enterprizes hath Money tempted thee to! What sinful Compliance, what Contempt of the Will of God, hast thou been put upon by the Hopes of Gain! And how much more real Joy hast thou felt in a full Purse, than a rich Conscience!

6. *And he promised, and sought Opportunity to betray him unto them, in the Absence of the Multitude.*

**H**OW faithful is the unhappy Judas in performing his Promise! Yet how many Promises hast thou made to God, O my Soul, and hast not regarded them! What Promises of Love, what Promises of Obedience, what Promises of Reformation! When thou hast been sick, what Vows of Seriousness, what Protestations of Cautiousness, and Fear of offending God for the future! Yet when God hath restor'd thee, when the Almighty hath been so favourable to thee, as to give thee the Desires of thy Heart, how careless hast thou been of thy strongest Promises! How regardless of the strictest Engagements! How negligent of thy Duty! How hast thou return'd to thy former Vomit, and, with the Swine that was wash'd, to her wallowing in the Mire.

7. *Then*

7. *Then came the Day of unleaven'd Bread, when the Passover must be kill'd.*

**H**OW many *Easter-Days* hast thou liv'd to see, O my Soul! Days when thou should'st have risen with Christ from the Death of Sin, and apply'd thy self unto a Life of Righteousness! Yet thou art the same still, thou wert so many Years ago. What Lust hast thou mortify'd, what Corruption hast thou kill'd, what darling Desires hast thou sacrific'd for Christ? Art not thou as dull and as dead in God's Service, as thou hast been heretofore? The Sins that thou hast left, was it the Love of God, or the Change of thy Condition, that made thee abandon them? On the blessed Day of thy Saviour's Resurrection, may be thou hast been devout and serious; but what strange Liberty hast thou given thy self soon after! How hath thy Piety and Goodness dy'd again, and thy Carefulness to please God, given up the Ghost, and expir'd!

8. *And he sent Peter and John, saying, Go and prepare us the Passover, that we may eat.*

**H**OW often, O my Soul, hath God sent his Spirit and his Messengers to thee, with an Order to prepare and meet thy God, by a serious Repentance! Yet thou hast either resisted his Spirit, or disoblig'd his Messengers, or undervah'd their Summons. How little hast thou regarded the Condescension of so Great a God! How little hast thou minded the Favour God did thee, in visiting so worthless a Creature! Dost not thou remember how thou hast pretended that thou hadst either Farms to see, or Oxen to buy, or an House to look after,

and thus hast put off thy God, that would fain have gather'd thee, *as an Hen doth her Brood under her Wings?*

9. *And they said unto him, Where wilt thou that we prepare?*

**H**OW careful are the Disciples, that they may do nothing contrary to their Master's Will! How do they enquire after the very Place where he would have them prepare! O my Soul! how little hast thou been concern'd whether thy God were pleas'd or not! Thou hast been so far from observing the Circumstantials of Religion, that thou hast not minded the Substance. How hast thou rush'd into Sin, as the Horse rushes into the Battle, without being solicitous or concern'd about offending God! How little hast thou enquir'd what thy Lord and Master requires of thee! How contentedly ignorant hast thou been of his Laws, and how loth to know thy Master's Will, that thou mightest not be oblig'd to do it!

10. *And he said unto them, Behold, when you are enter'd into the City, there shall a Man meet you, bearing a Pitcher of Water; follow him into the House where he enters in.*

**H**OW strangely doth Providence order Things! Just at the Disciples entering into the City, God orders this Man to meet them! How wonderfully, O my Soul, hath God made the second Causes to meet for thy Good! How hath God turn'd such Mens Hearts towards thee, into Mercy and Compassion! How often, when thou hast been



been in Trouble, hath God sent thee a Deliverer! How often, when thou hast seen no Probability of Help, hath God come in with his Salvation; yet, how careless hast thou been of his Providence! How apt hast thou been to ascribe these Events to second Causes! Dost not thou blush to think thou shouldst be so dull, as not to see God in such Dispensations?

II. *And ye shall say to the good Man of the House, the Master saith unto thee, Where is the Guest-Chamber, where I shall eat the Passover with my Disciples?*

HOW often, O my Soul, hath thy Great Master attempted to enter into thy Heart, and to make that his Guest-Chamber! and how furly, how ill-natur'd, how impudent hast thou been, in refusing so Great a Guest, whose Presence would have enrich'd thee with infinite Treasures! Temporal Profit, Honour, Ease, and Pleasure have but gently knock'd at the Door, and thou hast listen'd, and heard, and run to open to them. See where thy Love and thy Treasure lies; Christ hath stood without, knocking and calling, *Open to me, my Sister, my Spouse, for my Locks are wet with Dew;* but how loth hast thou been to rise from thy Bed of State, or from thy Couch of Luxury, to let in that heavenly Friend! Were it not just, when thy Prayers knock at Heaven's Gate, that he should fling them back into thy Face, and say, *As thou wouldst not bear when I call'd, so shalt thou call, and I will not hear?*

And

12. *And he shall shew you a large Upper-Room, furnish'd; there make ready.*

**A**ND, O my Soul, hath not thy Lord shewn thee very often a large Upper-Room, even Heaven itself, where the Supper of the Lamb is to be kept, and to which thou hast been invited! Yet how hast thou prefer'd this Dung-hill Earth before it! How contemptible have those everlasting Mansions been in thine Eyes! How hast thou hugg'd thy Plenty here below, and how contentedly hast thou liv'd without any Assurance that the eternal Riches shall fall to thy Share! How little hath that Heaven affected thee! How little have thy Affections been stirr'd with the Thoughts of it! How often hast thou look'd upon that glorious Place, without any Longings to be there, or to feast there with thy Great Redeemer!

13. *And they went and found as he had said to them, and made ready the Passover.*

**T**HIS is the Property of God, that he cannot lye: If he saith or fore-tells Things, they must necessarily come to pass: Yet how hast thou liv'd, O my Soul, as if thy God were false to his Word! Thou hast liv'd in Sin, and yet hast believ'd that God would receive thee at last into Glory! Thou hast embrac'd Follies, which he hath protested shall exclude thee from the Kingdom of Heaven, and yet hast fancy'd that thou shalt be happy! What is this, but to make God a Lyar, and to hope that he will not be so good as his Word? When thou hast hop'd for Heaven without Holiness, for a Crown without Conquest, for an everlasting Reward, without bearing the Heat and Burthen of the Day, and for the same Felicity the Son of God enjoys, without imitating him

in

in his Meekness, Patience, Humility, and Charity; hast not thou plainly flatter'd thy self, that God would break his Word, and act contrary to his Promises and Threatenings?

14. *And when the Hour was come, he sate down, and the twelve Apostles with him.*

SEE how the Great Saviour of the World disdains not to sit down at the Table with a Company of Fisher-men! Yet how scornfully, O my Soul, hast thou look'd sometimes upon thy Neighbour! What high Thoughts hast thou had of thine own Worth! And how hast thou undervalu'd the Man or Woman that have had no other Crime but Poverty! Thou hast thought thy Inferiours scarce worth talking to. How unlike thy Redeemer is this Pride and Haughtiness! Were Grace an Inhabitant of thy Heart, what low Thoughts wouldst thou have of thy self! How readily wouldst thou converse even with the meanest Saint! How wouldst thou learn to esteem Men more for their Holiness, than for their Riches! And how lovely would a Creature that hath the Image of God upon him, look in thine Eyes! Far more lovely than the greatest Monarch, or Lady, that have nothing to recommend them, but their outward Splendor.

15. *And he said unto them, With Desire I have desir'd to eat this Passover, before I suffer.*

HOW doth God long for our Happiness! How fervent are his Desires to do us good! Yet how little have these Longings prevail'd with thee, O my Soul! Notwithstanding all these Desires of God to make thee happy, how hast thou long'd after the muddy Waters of sensual Pleasures! Nay, long'd to be for ever miserable, when, in despite of his Intreaties



treaties not to neglect so great Salvation, thou hast long'd for the stollen Waters of sinful Delights, coveted Death, and been enamour'd with Destruction! How hath God entreated thee to close with him upon his own Terms; and how hast thou griev'd him with thy Refusal! How hath the Almighty beseech'd thee, by his Embassadors, to be reconcil'd to him; and yet thou hast stood out, and baffled the Stratagems of Mercy!

16. *For I say unto you, I will not any more eat thereof, until it be fulfill'd in the Kingdom of God.*

**C**Hrist rejoyces that the Shadows are at an end, and that the Substance or Antitype is approaching; for as the Passover was a Sign of the *Jews* Deliverance from *Egyptian* Bondage, so that Deliverance was a Shadow or Emblem of our Deliverance from Sin here, and our Exemption from all Misery and Trouble in Heaven, which was now to be effected by the Death Christ. But, O my Soul, how hast thou haunted after Shadows, and left the Substance unregarded? What are the Glories of this World, but mere Shews? Yet how fond art thou of them, and how strangely hast thou been enamour'd with them? These Shadows intimate, that there are more substantial Glories in the everlasting Mansions; yet these thou passest by, and the other thou art delighted with. See how thou doteest on those painted Coronets, those Butter-flies, those airy Nothings; while, with the Cock in the Fable, thou tramplest on the Pearl, even on the Pearl of Price; to purchase which, the Spiritual Merchant in the Gospel sold all he had.

17. *And he took the Cup, and gave Thanks, and said, Take this, and divide it among your selves.*

**H**OW thankful is our Great Mediator for every Mercy he receiv'd from his everlasting Father! Yet how ungrateful hast thou been, O my Soul, to thy mighty Benefactor! What Mercies hast thou receiv'd at his Hands, and what strange Returns hast thou made for them! Thy God hath been kind to thee, and thou hast been base and unworthy. How hast thou fed on his Blessings, and ascrib'd them to thy Wisdom and Industry! How hast thou liv'd upon his Charity, and spurn'd at his Laws! Foolish Creature, dost thou thus reward the Lord thy God? Thou should'st not eat a Bit, but send some Thanksgivings, Ejaculations to Heaven; yet thou contentest thy self with a careless Grace, and never thinkest more afterward of God. How little dost thou mind the Providences that are sent upon thee! And while thou considerest not the Operation of God's Hands, how canst thou be thankful?

18. *For I say unto you, I will not drink of the Fruit of the Vine, until the Kingdom of God shall come.*

**I**Ndeed, Heaven hath the best and choicest Wine, even the Wine of Angels. This Wine is the ravishing Love of God: This transports the Understanding, and wraps up the Intellects in Extasies of Joy and Comfort. A brutish Man knows not this, neither doth a Fool understand it. And hath not this been my Case, O my Soul? How weary hast thou been of thinking of this Banquet! How soon have thy Spirits tir'd with meditating of that Love! How ready hast thou been to think of the World,  
and

and the last Night's Revel; and how backward to reflect on this richer Entertainment! What a Weariness, it hath been to thee, to survey these Glories, to walk about that Jerusalem, and to behold the Towers and Bulwarks of it?

19. *And he took Bread, and gave Thanks, and brake it, and gave it unto them, saying, This is my Body, which is given for you: This do in Remembrance of me.*

**H**ERE begins the happy Institution of the holy Sacrament of Christ's Body and Blood, and the great Command to remember the Death of Jesus; and, together with that, an *Item* of the greatest Love that can be shewn to poor Mortals. Yet how backward, O my Soul, hast thou been sometimes to come to this holy Sacrament! Thou should'st have long'd for an Opportunity to remember this Death with the People of God. What is this Bread, but an Emblem of the Communion of Saints, and a Representation of thy Communion with the Great Head, the Lord Jesus? Yet how little Delight hast thou taken in this Ordinance! How often hast thou come out of Formality only! How little have thine Affections been mov'd with that stupendous Love! Either Sin, or Malice to thy Neighbour, or some worldly Trouble, hath made thee stay away. The Thoughts of this Love should have thrown down all thy strong Holds of Iniquity, and left thee in a calm, holy, spiritual Temper: But how hast thou preferr'd thy little Concerns in the World, before this Feast! And what Hazards hast thou run of being doom'd to a spiritual Famine; as those Guests, against whom the Master of the Feast protested, that they should never taste of his Supper!

20. *Like-*



20. *Likewise also the Cup, after Supper, saying,  
This Cup is the New Testament of my Blood,  
which is shed for you.*

**A** THOU dear a Rate was the Remission of our Sins purchas'd! The Blood of the Son of God was the Price! Greater Love hath no Man shewn, than that he lay down his Life for his Friends; but here is one that laid it down for his Enemies, that they may be pardon'd! How hast thou look'd upon this Pardon, O my Soul, sometimes without standing amaz'd at the Height, and Breadth, and Depth, and Length of the Love of God! How cold hast thou been in thy Desires after this precious Blood! Thou should'st have stood under the Cross, waiting for the Drops that trickled down! But the Familiarity of the joyful News of it, alas! hath too often wrought in thee a Disesteem of it. Nay, how light hast thou made of this Remission! and by making so light of it, thou hast prophan'd it too, when thou hast sinn'd, because God is willing to pardon Sinners, and hast made that pardoning Blood an Encouragement to indulge thy self in thy carnal Satisfaction; hath not this been counting the Blood of the Covenant an unholy Thing?

21. *But behold the Hand of him that betrays me, is with me on the Table.*

**A** ND did'st thou never approach the Table of thy Lord with a treacherous Heart, O my Soul! Hast not thou pretended Friendship, when thou hast been an Enemy, while thou hast been loth to part with a darling bosom Sin, or to examine what secret Sins thou wert guilty of, that thou mightest not be forc'd to part with them! Hast not thou shewn much  
Love

Love with thy Lips, while thy Heart hath gone astray from thy Redeemer? Thou hast, it may be, confess'd thy self to be a Sinner in general, and so hast join'd thy self to the Crowd of God's People, and come to the Supper of the Lord! But while thou hast been loth to descend to any particular Sins, hast not thou thereby discover'd thy secret Love to Sin, and thy feign'd and counterfeit Love to the holy Jesus!

22. *And truly the Son of Man goes, as it was determin'd; but Woe unto that Man, by whom he is betray'd.*

**H**OW dreadful a Thing is it to be instrumental in a Sin! and yet thou hast made nothing of it, O my Soul! How hast thou suffer'd thy self to be employ'd by others in Things which have been apparently unlawful! How apt hast thou been to tell a Lye after another, especially for a near Relation, or a Superior! How apt hath thy Conscience been to dispense with Offences against a gracious God, to please those from whom thou hast expected some Benefit and Advantage! Hath not the Word of God been blasphem'd by wicked Men, through thy Neglect of thy Saviour's Commands! How often hast thou scandaliz'd, and given Offence to other Men, by thy unchristian Practices; and how little hast thou minded the Threatenings of the holy Ghost in this Case? And while thou hast not only sinn'd thy self, but holpen to draw others into Sin, hast not thou thereby made thy self liable to the righteous Judgments of God?

23. *And*

23. *And they began to enquire among themselves, which of them it was that should do this Thing.*

**I**Ndeed Self-Examination is the only Way to come to a right Knowledge of our selves: Yet how careles, O my Soul, hast thou been of this Duty! How easily mightest thou have found, that thou wert guilty of such a Sin, and did'st transgress such a Command; but thou would'st not! How much better is it to be acquainted with our own Hearts, than to be Strangers to our selves! And what Danger dost thou involve thy self in, for want of this holy Search! How dost thou prepare for Self-delusion! And how impure must thy Heart grow! What a Dung-hill, what a Sink, what a Sty of Filthiness, where it is not purg'd by such Explorations! The Disease being known, it may be cur'd! But lying hid, it kills and destroys, when we think all safe! How easy a Matter were it to enquire, whether thou art that Hypocrite, that unprofitable Servant, that Loiterer, that slothful Person, that Busy-body, which the holy Ghost condemns! Yet thou hast shunn'd this Search, and been afraid of it, as of Poyson! Whereas it is the only Medicine from which thou may'st promise thy self an happy Recovery.

24. *And there was also a Strife among them, which of them should be accounted greatest.*

**S**EE how worldly Thoughts will crowd in, if we do not watch, even when we are engag'd in the most serious Acts of Worship! And hast not thou found such worldly sensual Thoughts enter into thy Mind, O my Soul, when thou hast been employ'd in the greatest Duties, even at the holy Sacrament it self! And have not they come in with thy Allowance and Approbation, and when they have surpriz'd thee, hast



not thou harbour'd them, made much of them, and been loth to expel them! How reverend should thy Thoughts be upon such Occasions! how free from such Extravagancies! how sequester'd from a vain World! how should they be taken up with the Love of God! How should the Glory of God engross their Strength and Power! See by this, which Way thy Byass leans! Behold by this, how strongly thy Heart bends to Things below! O when will it fix upon the Things which are above!

25. *And he said unto them, the Kings of the Gentiles exercise Lordship over them, and they that exercise Authority upon them, are call'd Benefactors.*

**H**OW unfit and improper is it for a Christian to conform to the Word! as improper, as for a Man of Reason to imitate Children or Mad-men: Yet how fond hast thou been, O my Soul, of the Pomp and Glories of this World! How hast thou admir'd the Riches and Grandeur of it! How hast thou wish'd thy self in such a Great Man's Place! Though the Apostles were somewhat ambitious before Christ's Ascension into Heaven, yet after the Effusion of the holy Ghost, they saw with other Eyes, and dispis'd these sublunary Honours and Dignities, as much as they esteem'd them before. O my Soul, when wilt thou follow this great Example! By the Rules of thy Profession, thou art to despise the World; and though thou art in the World, yet not to love the World! Notwithstanding this Command, how dost thou hanker after these Onions and Garlick, those certain Marks of the House of Bondage! How strong is thy Appetite to follow the Fashions of the World! And how apt art thou to make the Humour of the Age thy Pattern!

26. But ye shall not be so; but he that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve.

**A**YE! Self-denial is that which doth best become a Christian; that's the best Ornament he can put on, and which makes him look most lovely in the Eyes of God: Yet how inconsiderable hath this Dress been in thine Eyes, O my Soul! How loth hast thou been to deny thine Eyes such a dangerous Object, thine Ears such a Syren's Voice, thy Mouth such a delicate Dish, thy Feet such vain Company, thy Tongue such a smutty Jest, thy Hand such a lustful Touch, and thy Mind such a lascivious or covetous Thought! How hast thou thought thy self undone, when thou hast not had what thy sensual Appetite did crave! and how raging have thy Desires been after that which would ruin thee! How loth hast thou been to deny thy self in Superfluities, and to bestow them on the Poor! How hard hast thou thought it to shun such a Place, where thou knewest thou shouldst be tempted and be perswaded unto Sin!

27. For whether is greater, he that sitteth at Meat, or he that serveth? Is not he that sits at Meat? But I am among you as one that serveth.

**H**OW beautiful is Humility! the Son of God himself is enamour'd with it; tho' his Business was to command, not serve, yet he chuses to serve, rather than to exercise Authority! How unlike thy Saviour hast thou been, O my Soul! how proud! how self-conceited! how apt to prefer thy self before others! and how apt to think better of thy self than others! How apt to despise mean Services in the

Church of God; and how loth to be employ'd in Things that make for God's Glory; merely because thou hast been afraid they would blemish thy Credit and Reputation in the World! How loth hast thou been to visit thy poor Neighbour, or to dress his Wounds, or to tend him when destitute of Friends or Kindred! What a Disparagement hast thou thought it, to pay Respect to thy Inferiors! and how hast thou chosen the Upper Rooms at Feasts, and other Meetings, and lov'd the Praise of Men, more than the Praise of God!

*28. Ye are they which have continu'd with me in my Temptations.*

**I**T is not enough to stand a Blow or two, but to hold out to the End. To stay with Christ a few Weeks or Years, and then to forsake him, is base Cowardise; yet how weary, O my Soul, hast thou been of thy Master's Service! How soon hast thou been tir'd with Devotion! How dull hath Prayer made thee! If thou hast been fervent for a few Days, how soon hast thou given over! What excellent Progress didst thou make in Religion, when low in the World; and how art thou chang'd, since prosperous Fortunes have flown in upon thee! Or if thou hast believ'd and rejoyc'd in the Light for a Time, how hast thou, in the Hour of Temptation, turn'd thy Back, and like an Hireling, fled away! The Fruit thou hast brought forth in thy Youth, how hath it decay'd and wither'd in thy riper Age! And in Trouble, how hast thou laid Force upon the Kingdom of Heaven; and yet upon thy Deliverance, as Flies in Autumn, how hath thy Piety fainted and dy'd away!

*29. And*



29. *And I appoint unto you a Kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me.*

**W**HAT mighty Rewards doth God give for poor and mean Services! No less than a Kingdom, for a few Years Patience in well-doing! How should this encourage thee to work, O my Soul! How should it make thee strive to enter in at the strait Gate! Yet how apt art thou to cry, There is a Lyon without; there is a Bear in the Way; and what if there were? Is it not worth a being torn by Bears and Lyons, to inherit an everlasting Kingdom? What Pains do Men take to get a little Money, or purchase a Parcel of Lands, which they know not whether they shall possess above a Month or two! And yet thou hast not thought it worth toiling, to inherit a Kingdom which fades not away!

30. *That you may eat and drink at my Table, in my Kingdom, and sit on Thrones, judging the twelve Tribes of Israel,*

**H**OW will the Scene be chang'd e'er long! And those poor Saints which wicked Men counted Slaves, how will the World wonder, when they shall see them their Judges! Yet, how little dost thou think of that Day, O my Soul! How apt art thou to put it out of thy Mind, and consequently how unwilling to imitate those excellent Men, that meditate in the Law of God Day and Night! Didst thou think seriously of their Preferment in the last Day, thou wouldst write Copies after them, and be a much harder Student in that Holiness, which makes them capable to judge the World, and the apostate Angels: Thou dost not thoroughly believe that mighty Alteration. Didst thou open the Eye

of thy Faith, and see what Glory will be put upon them in that Day, thou would'st certainly be inquisitive how to participate of the same Privileges, and consequently be earnest in the Pursuit of the same Virtues and Graces, whereby they run and obtain the Prize.

31. *And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, Behold Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as Wheat.*

**H**OW busy is the Devil to ruin a sincere Christian! And hast not thou felt him busy in thy Heart, O my Soul, to deprive thee of the Crown of Righteousness, which the Lord hath promis'd to them that strive lawfully? Hast not thou felt him busy to poison thy Graces, busy to infect thy Prayers, busy to evacuate the Virtue of thy holy Performances, and yet thou hast not resisted him! How have all the Avenues been set open, that that *King of Darkness* might come in! How hast thou hugg'd his Temptations, suffer'd him to revel in thy Breast, yielded to his evil Suggestions, and been persuaded by his Arguments! He hath but beckon'd to thee, and thou hast run. How hast thou betray'd the Citadel of the holy Ghost, prophan'd his Temple, and suffer'd the Sanctuary to be robb'd by Heathens and Infidels!

32. *But I have pray'd for thee, that thy Faith fail not.*

**T**HUS Christ prays for all true Believers, that God may not forsake them. Yet how dejected hast thou been, O my Soul, upon the least Storm that hath fallen upon thee! how ready hast thou been to cast away thy Hope! how ready to say  
with

with *Sion*, the Lord hath forsaken me, and God hath forgotten me! Dost thou think God doth not hear the great Mediator's Prayer for thee? Dost thou think he can refuse his Intercessions, whom he always hears? When he heard his Prayers for those that crucify'd him, that God would not for that barbarous Fact exclude them from Hopes of Salvation, will not he hear him, dost thou think, when he prays for thee, that thou may'st not be deprived of the Light of God's Countenance! Therefore, why art thou cast down, O my Soul, and why art thou disquieted within me? Hope in God, for I shall yet praise him, who is the Health of my Countenance, and my God!

33. *And he said unto him, Lord, I am ready to go with thee both into Prison and to Death.*

**A** Brave Resolution! for tho' he miscarry'd in the Performance, yet, I doubt not, but he really spoke at this Time what he thought: But how faint hast thou been in thy Resolutions, O my Soul; how loth to resolve upon a Duty that hath had some Hardship in it! How loth to resolve upon leaving a Sin, in which thy Profit hath been wrapp'd up! How hast thou humm'd and haw'd when thou hast been to declare thy Resolution to suffer for Righteousness sake! How hast thou been frighted at the smallest Danger! Thou hast, may be, resolv'd to suppress Sin for the present, but not to reform it for the future; to clip the luxurious Branches, but not to pull up the evil Tree by the Root; and what pitiful half-Resolutions have these been! How unlike St. Paul, who was ready, not only to suffer, but to die also, at *Jerusalem*, for the Name of the Lord Jesus!



34. *And he said, I tell thee, Peter, the Cock shall not crow this Day, before that thou shalt thrice deny that thou knowest me.*

**G**OD sees that which Man cannot see : Why then, O my Soul, dost not thou shun that Rock which God sees, and says will split thy Vessel ? Thou wantest such a sensual Pleasure, God sees and protests it will undo thee ; yet dost thou believe thine own Appetite, more than that God who sees all Things in their first Principles ! He sees that such a Blessing will be thy Bane, and therefore wisely takes it away from thee ; why then dost thou grumble ? Thou think'st much of parting with a Child, with such a Revenue, with such an Advantage, with such a Friend ; but God sees if thou enjoyest it, it will certainly tempt thee to dote upon it, and seduce thee from setting thine Affections on nobler Objects, and therefore makes thee lose it. Why then dost thou find Fault with his Providence, who certainly sees best what is most proper and convenient for thee, and gives thee that which is most wholesome, tho' not always what is most pleasing and palatable ? How often hast thou thought that God did thee wrong, in depriving thee of what thou lovedst most, when it was certain, that in doing so, he did thee a singular Kindness, for he saw the Hurt it would do thee ; and therefore, like a tender Father, took away the Knife, the unhappy Instrument of thy Ruin.

35. *And*

35. *And he said unto them, When I sent you without Purse, or Scrip, or Shoos, did you lack any thing? They said, Nothing.*

**W**HERE Men trust God's Providence entirely, and without wavering, Providence is engag'd not to see them want; yet how basely hast thou diffided this Providence, O my Soul; tho' thou hast seen even miraculous Dispensations, yet when thou hast been in Danger again, how hath thy Faith fail'd again! What anxious Cares and Carkings have know'd thy Breast, when Ravens and dumb Creatures have committed themselves to God's Wisdom and Goodness? How hath God assur'd thee, by the various Mercies and Favours he hath conferr'd upon thee, that he would not leave thee, nor forsake thee; yet how little hast thou trusted to his Promises! When God hath withdrawn his Hand of Bounty from thee, only to try thee whether thou wouldst stay thy self upon him, and when the Fig-Tree hath not blossom'd, how hast thou presently begun to sink, O thou of little Faith! What great Things would God have done for thee, if it had not been for thy Unbelief, which stops his Hand, and will not suffer him to do any mighty Work for thee!

36. *Then said he unto them, But now he that hath a Purse, let him take it, and likewise his Scrip; and he that hath no Sword, let him sell his Garment, and buy one.*

**H**OW like a Father doth Christ forewarn his Disciples of their approaching Danger, and of the mighty Change of their Quiet, into a very dismal and calamitous Estate and Condition, that they may

may not think much of it when it comes! How often do the Ministers of the Gospel forewarn thee, O my Soul, of the Change of thy Prosperity into Adversity, of the Change of thy Health into Sickness, of the Change of thy Life into Death, yet thou wilt take no Warning! How apt art thou to flatter thy self, that thy Mountain shall never be shaken, that thy Prosperity shall never be mov'd, that here thou art to continue many Years, that thy Health will be vigorous to the last! How grievous and how irksome will that Change be, which Foresight did not qualify; and how much heavier will be the Burthen at last, which thou didst not believe would come upon thee! How soft and easy would thy Fall be, if thou thought'st of it beforehand! The more unexpected thy Sorrows are, the more they will gall, and that which will add to the Misery, will be, the Remembrance of thy former dangerous Security.

*37. For I say unto you, that this that is written, must yet be accomplish'd in me: And he was reckon'd among the Transgressors; for the Things concerning me, have an End.*

**H**OW rudely, and how barbarously doth this blind World handle the best of Men, and use them like Transgressors! Wonder not at it, O my Soul, if this be thy Lot and Portion, neither think the worse of God, because he suffers it; how can it be otherwise, where Men are Strangers to Goodness, and cannot prize it: Providence in the mean while doth no Wrong, for the Enemies of God shall want no Plagues in the other Life, and the Lovers of God no Recompence. Matter not what Men call or count thee here; the great Day will bring forth thy Innocence as the Light, and thy Righteousness



teousness as the Noon-Day. What if Men call thee Fool for being consciencious, as long as thy God doth count thee wise, thou lovest nothing of thy Reputation. How much better is it to be one of *Christ's* Fools, than of the Number of the wise Men of this World! The Children of this World are wiser in their Generation, than the Children of Light; but then the Children of Light will be found wiser in their Generation too, than the other, when this Life is ended. Both have their Time, one here, the other hereafter. Be content, O my Soul, to be reproach'd and mis-represented here, for thy Father, that sees in secret, will reward thee openly.

38. *And they said unto him, Lord, behold here are two Swords. And he said unto them, It is enough.*

**W**Here the Roads are unsafe, there Men carry Swords and Weapons about them, to defend themselves against the Enemy: So is the Way to Heaven, abundance of Murtherers lie in wait to snatch the unwary Passenger; yet, O my Soul, how loth hast thou been to arm thy self against the Powers, and Principalities, and spiritual Wickednesses in high Places, that have too often beset thee, as thou hast been travelling towards the Land of Promise! How hast thou expos'd thy self to their Rage and Fury! What Advantages hast thou given them, and how often, upon that Account, hast thou been hurl'd into by Ways and dangerous Pits! Tho' God hath offer'd thee the whole Armour of the Spirit, yet how unwilling hast thou been to put on the Helmet of Salvation, and the Breast-Plate of Righteousness, and to take the Shield of Faith, whereby thou mightest have quench'd the fiery Darts of the Devil.

39. *And*

39. *And he came out, and went (as he was wont) to the Mount of Olives; and his Disciples also follow'd him.*

**T**HIS Mount of Olives, in the Days of the Kings of Judah, was defil'd with Idolatry, and therefore call'd the Mount of Corruption. Christ goes up to that Mount, to purge it by his Tears and Prayers. O my Soul, what hath thy Heart been, but the Seat of Corruption, yet how backward hast thou been to purge that fulsome Stable! What Filth and Nastiness hast thou suffer'd to gather there, and yet taken no Care to remove it! How little hast thou consider'd of thy Saviour's Promise, *Blessed are the pure in Heart, for they shall see God!* What Pains hast thou taken to keep thy Body clean? But O, how careless of a Conscience sprinkled from evil Works! And is not this to be of the Pharisees Religion, who made clean the Outside of the Cup and Platter, but within were Strangers to Faith, Judgment, and Mercy, and the weightier Matters of the Law.

40. *And when he was come to the Place, he said to them, Pray, lest ye enter into Temptation.*

**P**Rayer certainly is the best Antidote against Temptations, yet how averse sometimes hast thou been from this Exercise, O my Soul; when thou hast gone into dangerous Company, how loth hast thou been to arm thy self with Prayer! When thou hast been in Trouble, how little hast thou thought of this sovereign Remedy! or if thou hast made use of it, how cold, how faint, how superficial have been thy Supplications! how often hast thou had greater Confidence in the Arm of Flesh, than in the Strength  
of

of God ! Prayer hath chas'd away Armies, turn'd to Flight the Host of Aliens, stop'd the Mouth of Lyons, quench'd the Flames of Fire, made the Sun stand still, and the Shadow go back ten Degrees ; hath shut and open'd Heaven ; and yet, how slender, how weak, how indifferent hath thy Love been to this spiritual Engine, which hath conquer'd the Fort above, and even forc'd the Almighty into Pity and Compassion !

41. *And he was withdrawn from them about a Stones-cast, and kneel'd down, and pray'd.*

**O**UR Saviour, when he means to pray most earnestly, retires from all Company ; yet how irksome hath Retirement been to thee, O my Soul ! What a Burthen hath it seem'd, and how glad hast thou been, when Company or Business have call'd thee away from that Penance, and given thee a Diversion ! How much more pleasing have Crowds and Multitudes of Business, and People, been to thee, than Privacy ! In serious Retirements, thou mightest have seen the brighter Goings of God, and had larger Experience of his Power and Goodness ; but thou hast been afraid of meeting thy God in Private, and by that Means depriv'd thy self of the gracious Influences which he imparts to them that love his Company ! Behold, thy Redeemer bows his Knees, and kneels on the cold Ground, to offer up his Supplications to his Father ! How strangely hast thou consulted thine Ease in Prayer ! How afraid hast thou been to kneel, if thou hast had no Cushion ! how loth to put thy Flesh to any Trouble in God's Service ! Did the Son of God prostrate himself upon the Grass or Earth he stood upon, and art thou afraid of hurting thy self in Prayer, if thou hast not the Accommodations of Softness and Luxury ?



421 *Saying, Father, if thou be willing, remove this Cup from me; nevertheless not my Will, but thine be done.*

**A**N excellent Example! And with the Example, a Command to resign our Wills to God's Will, even in the greatest Troubles and Calamities. And dost thou observe this, O my Soul! Art thou content with the Will and Pleasure of God, when he lays Afflictions upon thy Loins! Dost thou say freely, and without murmuring, *It is the Lord, let him do what seems good to him?* O how hast thou repin'd sometimes! how impatient hast thou been under thy Chain! how unwilling to submit to the Hand of God! how forc'd hath been thy Humiliation! Where hath been thy Belief of God's Wisdom and Goodness? If thou believest God to be infinitely wise, and consequently that what he sends on thee, is most wisely order'd, why dost thou murmur? If thou believest him to be infinitely good, and therefore intending all that happens to thee for thy good, why dost thou think *the Ways of the Lord are not equal?*

43. *And there appear'd to him an Angel from Heaven, strengthening him.*

**I**F this blessed Minister of Heaven did comfort him with Words, we must suppose, he humbly besought him to look upon the Glory set before him, and reflect on the vast Good that would arrive to all Mankind by his Passion; and that he encourag'd him to go on with the great Work of Redemption. O my Soul! and hath not thy God sent an Angel to thee, a Minister of his Word, in thy Afflictions, and encourag'd thee by the Hopes of eternal Glory, to bear up, and to be undaunted under all the Waves and Billows that

that went over thee! Nay, hath not thy God himself suggested to thy Mind, what Benefit thy Affliction would yield, what peaceable Fruits of Righteousness, what hatred of Sin, what Love to Holiness, and what Humility it would produce! And yet none of these have been able to keep thee from sinking! How sensual is thy Mind! How earthly are thy Affections! What polishing, what refining do they want yet! And yet if Affliction, which is the Furnace that must purify the Gold, will not do it, what can be suppos'd to do it!

44. *And being in an Agony, he pray'd more earnestly; and his Sweat was, as it were, great Drops of Blood, falling down to the Ground.*

SEE, O my Soul! how thy Sin presses the Son of God! See how great the Horror of it is, that it forc'd him into Agonies, and these Agonies vent themselves in a bloody Sweat! He saw the Wrath of God, that flaming Sword which hung over thee, the revenging Arm that God shook against thee. He saw the Hell thou hadst deserv'd, the Torments thou hadst merited, the Agonies thou hadst involv'd thy self in. He saw thy Sins in their full Latitude and Extent, what Encroachments they had made on the Divine Nature; what Affronts they had offer'd to the Great Majesty of Heaven. Being very sensible of the infinite Purity of God, he saw the Dreadfulness, the Monsterousness of thy Transgressions, which had made War with that Divine Purity. He saw the Fire and Brimstone, the everlasting Furnace, the burning Lake, that was design'd to be thy Recompence; he saw it and trembled; he saw it and stagger'd; he felt it, being infinitely compassionate, and feeling it, labour'd to shake it off, and to get from under it; and as he struggles with the Load, his sacred Body

Body breaks forth into a strange kind of Sweat. Didst thou ever consider, O my Soul, what thy Sins did cost? Hadst thou consider'd it, how couldst thou have been so merry, so blithe, so jocular in the Commission?

45. *And when he rose up from Prayer, and was come to his Disciples, he found them sleeping for Sorrow.*

STRANGE! Sleep should oppress People when they have Death before them! Yet, why wonderest thou, O my Soul, when thou hast slept securely at the very Gates of Hell, in the Suburbs of Destruction? How hast thou even snorted in Sin, when the Messengers of God have cry'd out, *Fire, everlasting Fire!* over thy Head! How quiet hast thou been, how secure, how jolly, when the Fiends have been about thee, as the *Philistines* about *Sampson*! How hast thou play'd, and laugh'd, and smil'd, when the eternal Wrath of God hath been ready to seize on thee! How was it, that thou wert not afraid! how was it, that thou didst not give a Start in the midst of thy Slumber! What if thou hadst awak'd in Hell!

46. *And said unto them, Why sleep ye? Rise and pray, that ye enter not into Temptation.*

INDEED, Sleepiness and Idleness is the Devil's Opportunity to perswade us into Sin. Had the Disciples pray'd, instead of sleeping, 'tis possible they would not have fled when they saw Danger nigh! And hath not the Devil prevail'd with thee by Idleness, O my Soul? When thou hast, with *David*, taken thy Rest and Ease, hath not Satan brought a *Pathsheba* to thee, and thrown some ill Thought into thy Mind? When thou hast not known how to  
spend



spend thy Time, hath not the Enemy made thee swallow the dangerous Bait? When thou hast stretch'd thy self upon thy Couch, and indulg'd thy self, hast not thou felt then thy Love to God decay, and thy Affections to the the World to increase, and thy Faculties to dissolve into Vanity and Voluptuousness, and Contempt of better Things?

47. *And while he yet spake, behold a Multitude! and he that was call'd Judas, one of the Twelve, went before them, and drew near unto Jesus, to kiss him.*

**W**HAT a Change is here! from *Christ's* Purse-bearer, to a Leader or Captain of Thieves and Murtherers! And, O my Soul, what a mighty Change hath there been sometimes in thy spiritual Condition! From a zealous Saint, how often hast thou deflected into Formality and Hypocrisy! From holy Heats, thou art fallen into Lukewarmness. How vigorous wast thou once in prosecuting thy eternal Happiness! And how hast thou fainted afterward! Once thou didst lay Force upon the Kingdom of Heaven; of late thou hast laid Force upon the Kingdom of Darknes, storm'd Hell, and invaded Damnation. Once thou wast a strict Observer of Religious Severities: How loosely hast thou liv'd of late? Once God seem'd to have thy Heart; But did not Sin and the World possess it afterwards? Dull, blockish Soul! Was God beautiful and delightful heretofore, and hath he ceas'd to be so now?

48. *But Jesus said unto him, Judas, betrayest thou the Son of Man with a Kiss?*

**A**ND hast not thou thus betray'd him, O my Soul, even with a false and counterfeit Devotion?

tion? Hast not thou too often pretended God's Glory, when thou hast sought thine own? And seem'd to be zealous for Religion, when it was only thine own private Interest thou didst aim at? Hast not thou profess'd Love to the holy *Jesus*, when at the same Time thou hast most basely affronted him? Hast not thou drawn nigh unto him with thy Lips, when in thy Conversation thou hast deny'd him? Hast not thou told him sometimes, that thou repentest, when thou hast been loth to part with thy darling bosom Sins? Hast not thou kneel'd under his Cross sometimes, to express thy Veneration of him, when, in good Truth, thou hast conspir'd against him with his Enemies? Hast not thou maintain'd thy League with Sin, while thou hast pretended, by thy bowing to the Son of God, that that League was broken and dissolv'd? What Perfidiousness, what Treachery, what Dissimulation hast thou been guilty of! Canst thou think of it, and not be convers'd!

49. *When they which were about him, saw what would follow, they said unto him, Lord, shall we smite with the Sword?*

WHAT preposterous Means and Ways do Men make use of, to effect their Deliverance! These poor Men hope to do Wonders by smiting with the Sword: A Way neither warranted by any Command of God, nor profitable. So the *Jews* in *Jeremy's* Time, thought there was no Way for them to escape, but fleeing into the Land of *Egypt*. And, O my Soul, hast thou not very often, out of Mistrust of God's Providence, made use of wrong Means to compass thy Safety? How hast thou thought to be rid of thy Calamity, by telling a Lye, or by acting against thy Conscience! How hast thou thought sometimes to redeem thy Credit with vain People, by complying with their Sins! And when thou hast  
been

been under some Distress, how hast thou endeavour'd to get out of it, by abusing thy Neighbour, or by reviling those that revil'd thee! When thou hast been groaning under Poverty, how hath the Devil suggested to thee, to mend thy Condition by cheating, and thou hast obey'd the Motion! What Comfort canst thou take in a Deliverance compass'd by Sin? Or what Satisfaction in a Rescue effected by the Devil's Means; at least, by doing Things acceptable to him.

50. *And one of them smote the Servant of the High Priest, and cut off his right Ear.*

**W**HEN we do Things of our own Head, without Command from God, what Inconveniences do we run into! These unwary Men smite, never staying for Christ's Answer. O my Soul! thus thou hast rush'd into dangerous Actions and Enterprizes, without consulting the Oracles of God; and hast taken it for granted, that they were lawful, because thou didst apprehend them to make for thy Interest. Thus hast thou ventur'd upon some Recreations; which, upon pondering the Rules of the Gospel, would have been found contrary to the Law of God; and hast run into Play-houses, without consulting with any serious Men, whether it be agreeable to the Will of Christ; and hast made nothing of thy vain and fantastick Dresses, and all because thou wouldst not examine the Particulars which the Lord thy God requires of thee. What a Decay hast thou thereby brought upon thy Virtues! And how hath thy Sense of God abated upon this imprudent Behaviour.



51. *And Jesus answer'd, and said, Suffer yet thus far. And he touch'd his Ear, and heal'd him.*

**H**ERE we have an excellent Pattern of doing Good for Evil. O my Soul, how backward hast thou been to this great Duty! How hast thou study'd Revenge upon the least Affront or Injury, whether real or imaginary! How hast thou fretted and fum'd, when Men have cross'd thy Humour, Will, or Inclination; and contriv'd immediately which Way thou mightest be even with the Offender! Oh, what a Stranger hast thou been to loving thy Enemies, and doing Good to them that have hated thee! When a Neighbour hath displeas'd thee, presently thy Kindness hath ceas'd, and the Stream of thy Bounty hath stopp'd; as if thy Saviour had neither shewn thee an Example, nor given any Precept to the contrary: And yet thou hast pretended to be a Christian. But wherein hast thou done more than others! Wherein hast thou exceeded the Righteousness of *Scribes* and *Pharisees*; nay, the Righteousness of *Pagans*? If thou dost Good to them that do good to thee, what Thanks hast thou? For Sinners also do even the same.

52. *Then Jesus said unto the Chief Priest, and Captains of the Temple, and the Elders which were come to him, Be ye come out as against a Thief, with Swords and Staves?*

**S**EE how these Wretches arm themselves against Omnipotence; as if *Christ*, if he would, could not, with a Breath, have broke their Swords, and snapp'd their Staves in funder. How secure hast thou

thou thought thy self, O my Soul, against the Vengeance of Heaven, when Riches have flown in upon thee, and thy Friends have been multiply'd! How little hast thou regarded Mens Threatening, and, what is more, God's Anger, while thy Years have been crown'd with Weath, and Waters of a full Cup have been wrung out unto thee! This hath tempted thee to sin with a lawless Freedom, and made thee think God was afraid to sink thy Vessel, because its Sails were of Silk. Alas, how easily could God have made thee know the Vanity of these Cobwebs; and with the least Blast blown thee up, and sent thee, with thy Riches, to the Vault of outer Darkness! Neither Treasures nor Attendants can keep out a revenging Arm: And it is but a childish Attempt to get a strong Guard about us, that God's Rods and Axes may not reach us.

*53. When I was daily with you in the Temple, you stretch'd forth no Hands against me; but this is your Hour, and the Power of Darkness.*

**D**arkness, indeed, must have very great Power, where it can encourage Men to fight against God. And, O my Soul, hast not thou found such a Thing as Darkness in thy Understanding, and such Darkness as hath made thee resist God's holy Spirit, and sin against God with a stiff Neck, and with an high Hand! What gross Conceits hast thou harbour'd of Almighty God! How hast thou sometimes thought him to be altogether such a one as thy self! And when thou hast obstinately continu'd in walking after thine own Heart, in despise of all that could be alledg'd to the contrary, hast not thou fought against thy great Creator and blessed Redeemer? How ignorant hast thou been of the Ways and Nature of God! Nay, how pleasing hath that Ignorance been to thee!

How hast thou rejoyc'd in it, and thought thy self wise for talking at random of Almighty God, as blind Men do of Colours ! If this was not to be under the Empire of Darknes, what could deserve that Name !

54. *Then took they him, and led him, and brought him unto the High Priest's House, and Peter follow'd afar off.*

**P**eter follows afar off, loth to run himself into Danger : Such hath been thy following of *Christ*, O my Soul ! cowardly, afar off, trembling with Fear and Pusillanimity ! If *Christ* deserves not thy venturing All, even Life it self, what dost thou profess thy self a Christian for ? He that hath promis'd to give thee everlasting Life, doth not he deserve the voluntary Loss of thy temporal Life ! O, how hast thou been afraid, when thy Conscienciousness hath drawn thee into any Inconvenience ! How afraid hast thou been of doing Things he hath commanded, when they have seem'd to be prejudicial to thy Interest ! So far as thou couldst safely profess, and practise the Rules of Goodness, so far thou hast ventur'd ; but when any Trouble hath been like to arise upon the Account of that Goodness, O how hast thou drawn back, or serv'd thy God by Halves, and with Reserves ! And is this a just Ground for thy Hopes of Heaven ! Is this a Foundation firm enough to build thy Expectations of a future Kingdom on ! O, be asham'd of thy Cowardice, and take heed that no Man take thy Crown.

55. *And*



55. *And when they had kindled a Fire in the midst of the Hall, and were set down together, Peter sate down among them.*

**U**Nhappy Peter, to sit down with ill Company, which were like to draw him into Sin! O my Soul, how often hast thou imitated this unwary Apostle! How hast thou thrust thy self into loose Company! and what hast thou got by it, but Death and Ruin! How safe mightest thou have been, hadst thou with-held thy Foot from such Society! These have made thee vain in thy Talk, frothy in thy Thoughts, uncircumspect in thy Actions! How have thy holy Heats been cool'd by such Companions, thy Piety stabb'd, thy Conscienciousness turn'd out of Doors, thy Seriousness lessen'd, thy Boldness increas'd, thy Modesty chang'd into Confidence, and thy former Watchfulness into sinful Security! This thou hast felt, this thou hast seen, and yet hast hanker'd after such Familiars, and thought thy self undone, if thou couldst not enjoy their Friendship! This hath made holy Discourses tedious to thee, and the Conversation of self-denying Men irksom. This hath made thee impatient of better Society, and wish thou mightest not meet them, for fear their Sobriety should be a secret Reproof of thy looser Carriage.

56. *But a certain Maid beheld him, as he sate by the Fire, and earnestly look'd upon him, and said, This Man was also with him.*

**T**HIS Maiden looks upon Peter, and knows him, and proclaims it in her Discourse. What Injuries do we to our Neighbours, by giving our selves Liberty to censure their Actions and Behaviour! Hath not this been thy Sin, O my Soul! How hast

thou spent thy Time in talking of thy Neighbour's Actions! and while thou hast found Fault with this and that Particular, which thy Neighbour did, and hast proclaim'd his Infirmities, revil'd his Weakness to the Company thou hast been in, and hast found nothing to discourse of, but what this or the other Body did, how hast thou wrong'd thy Neighbour's Reputation, and sometimes hinder'd Men from doing Good to him! And how often hast thou told Lies of him, either aggravated his Faults, or misreported his Behaviour, or put a wrong Construction on his Words! And, O my Soul, how little hast thou regarded the Omnipresence of God, and how mightest thou have prevented all this, by pious Conferences! Had thy Mind been set upon spiritual Things, how couldst thou have run out into this Licentiousness! And, O how careless hast thou been of that Rule of Equity, *What you would have other Men do to you, do ye even so them!*

57. *And he deny'd him, saying, Woman, I know him not.*

**W**HAT Peter said falsely of his Master, hath been verify'd too often in thee, O my Soul; for whatever thou hast pretended, thou hast not truly known him: And that which makes thy Ignorance more heinous, is, that it hath been wilful. How shouldst thou know him, when thou hast been loth to read his Word, to pray fervently, and to converse with those who would have brought thee to a right Knowledge of him! Thou hast contented thy self with a superficial Knowledge, but hast not so known him, as to know the Power of his Resurrection. Hadst thou known him aright, thou wouldst have felt his Operations

Operations in thy Breast, and long'd to be at Peace with him. Is it possible to know his Beauty, and not to be enamour'd with him? Or his Perfection, and not to love him? Or the Fulness of Joy at his Right Hand, and not to cry, *Lord, for ever give me to drink of this Water!*

58. *And after a little while, another saw him, and said, Thou art also of them. And Peter said, Man, I am not.*

SEE how, when one Temptation is off, another comes. And is not this an Emblem of thy Warfare, O my Soul; when a Temptation to Uncharitableness hath taken its Leave, another to Pride hath risen; when that hath seem'd to be withdrawn, another to sinful Security hath appear'd; and when this hath retir'd, another to mistrust God's Providence hath discover'd it self; when this hath been taken away, another to Envy hath succeeded; or if this hath made no Impression, another to neglect of thy Duty hath follow'd; and yet how safe hast thou thought thy self, when one Storm was past! How hast thou suffer'd the next Suggestion to prevail with thee, after thou hast courageously resisted the former! How hast thou sunk under the second and third Assault, when, in the first, thou seem'dst to be invincible! How mightest thou have sham'd the Devil by a continual Resolvedness, whereas now he can boast of his Triumph over thee, and thou art left to bewail thy Inconsiderateness!

59. *And*



59. *And about the Space of one Hour after, another confidently affirm'd, saying, Of a Truth, this Fellow also was with him; for he is a Galilean.*

**H**OW peremptory and confident is Malice! How doth it turn mere Probabilities into Certainties, and Surmises into Realities! And, O my Soul, hast thou never dealt so with thy Neighbour? When thou hast cherish'd a Grudge against him, how quickly hast thou spy'd Faults in his Actions? And if thou hast seen but the Shadow of an Error in him, how hast thou presently aggravated it, and of a Mole-hill, made a Mountain, and improv'd a Likelihood into strong Asseverations? How hast thou discover'd thy ill Nature in such Actions! And tho' other Men, perhaps, have taken no Notice of thy sinister Aims, yet hath not God seen thy Heart, and noted thy secret Sin in his Book? And having set it down, will he not produce it in the last Day, (if thy Return be not speedy and serious) to thy everlasting Confusion, there being nothing secret, but what will be made manifest in that Day, when God shall judge the Secrets of Mens Hearts by the Gospel?

60. *And Peter said, Man, I know not what thou say'st; and immediately, while he spake, the Cock crew.*

**W**Hat excellent Teachers are dumb Creatures! The Cock here teaches *Peter*, and puts him in mind of his Unwatchfulness! How often hast thou been instructed, O my Soul, by such Creatures, and yet thou hast not been the better for it! The Lamb hath taught thee Meekness, yet thou hast been angry and cholerick! The Serpent hath taught thee Wisdom,

Wisdom, yet thou hast continu'd foolish and imprudent! The Ox knows his Owner, and the Ass his Master's Crib, yet thou hast not consider'd what vast Mercies thy great Master hath pour'd out upon thee! The Stork, the Crane, and the Swallow, return at their appointed Time; yet thou hast not return'd to thy God at a Time when he hath earnestly waited for thy Conversion! The Bee and Ant teach thee Industry, yet how lazy hast thou been in the Work of thy Salvation! The Dog teaches thee Fidelity, yet how unfaithful hast thou been to God, and to thy Conscience! The Snail teaches thee Slowness to Wrath, yet how hast thou broke forth into unruly Passions! How many Ways hath God taught thee, and yet how loth hast thou been to be instructed!

61. *And the Lord turn'd, and look'd upon Peter, and Peter remember'd the Word of the Lord, how he had said unto him, Before the Cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice.*

O My Soul, how often hath Christ look'd upon thee, and thou hast turn'd away thine Eyes from him! He hath look'd upon thee in his Word, and yet thou hast not minded him. He hath look'd upon thee in the holy Sacrament, yet thou hast taken no Notice of it. He hath look'd upon thee in thy Afflictions, and yet thou hast not seen him. Hadst thou observ'd his Looks, thou wouldst have remember'd his Sayings, and his Precepts, and done them. Perhaps thou hast remember'd his Words, but thou hast not consider'd the Sense of them; or if thou hast consider'd the Sense, thou hast thought it did not belong to thee. O how willing hast thou been to transfer thy Sin from thy self to others! What would not the Damn'd in Hell give for such a gracious Look of the Lord Jesus, as thou hast had sometimes!

sometimes ! And canst thou make light of that which those unhappy Spirits would prize at a mighty Rate !

62. *And Peter went out, and wept bitterly.*

**W**Hat a blessed Sight is this, to see a penitent Sinner weep ! How hard-hearted hast thou been under thy Sins, O my Soul ! Not a Drop hath distill'd from the Rock of thy Heart, even after presumptuous Sins. While other Saints have water'd their Couches with their Tears, thine hath been dry. Thou hast wept upon the reading of a Romance ; and canst not thou weep at the Remembrance that thy Father and Redeemer dy'd for thee ? Thou canst weep under a great Burthen, and cannot the great Load of thy Transgressions make thee weep ? Thy Sins are as great as other Mens, why shouldst not thou weep as other Men ? Shouldst thou be so unhappy as to drop into Hell, thou wouldst weep Day and Night ; and shouldst not thou weep now, to prevent those vain and unprofitable Tears ? Alas, my Soul ! thou hast made thy self merry with thy Sins, how is it possible thou shouldst weep for them ? Oh, think what thy Master hath said, *Blessed are they that weep and mourn now, for they shall laugh at last.*

63. *And the Men that held Jesus, mocked him, and smote him.*

**A**ND dost thou think that those were the only Men that ever mock'd the Lord Jesus ? O my Soul, what thinkest thou of thy Mock-Fasts, and of thy Mock-Prayers ? When thou hast fasted sometimes, hast not thou pretended Sorrow for thy Sins, when at the same Time thou hast been loth to part  
with



with them? Hast not thou profess'd Grief for thy Lusts, when at the same Time thou hast hugg'd them as thy Darlings? Hast not thou given God the Shell of thy Duties, without the Kernel? And hast not thou pray'd sometimes to be rid of secret Corruptions, while thou hast hop'd God would not hear thee? What Vows hast thou made in Trouble, and how forgetful hast thou been to pay them! Thou hast promis'd *Hecatombs*, and at last, like that foolish Merchant in the Fable, laid a few Dates upon God's Altar; and is not this mocking of God, and in a very high Degree?

64. *And when they had blindfolded him, they struck him on the Face, and ask'd him, saying, Prophecy who is it that smote thee?*

**W**HAT dreadful Sins doth brutish Ignorance put Men upon! Sins that, were their Eyes open, would make their Hair stand on end. Had those Wretches known who it was they abus'd thus, it would have precipitated them into the Gulph of Sorrow and Despair. O my Soul, how is it that thou dost not quake to think of the Sin thou didst commit in thy Ignorance! How didst thou laugh at Sins, which have made other good Men weep Rivers of Tears! How bold hast thou been in the Affronts of the divine Majesty! Affronts, at the Thoughts of which some Saints have swoon'd, and yet thou can'st think of them at this Time without Indignation! Thou would'st, indeed, commit them no more, 'tis like; but how should the very Remembrance of them strike Terror into thy Mind, and make thee wish for Fountains of Water to bewail them!

65. *And many other Things blasphemously they spake against him.*

**H**OW restless is Sin! it cannot stop, it must roll on from one Precipice to another. One would think these desperate Men had done enough, when they had mock'd him; but they cannot hold; the Master they serve, leaves them not, but prompts them on to greater Villanies and Abuses: And dost not thou remember something like this in thy self, O my Soul? When thou hast engag'd in a Sin that hath been heinous and dreadful, hath not that Sin wanted Support from other Sins? And hath it not forc'd thee to call in other Follies to maintain it? How hast thou defended thy Theft and Uncleanneſs with a Lie, and that Lie with another Lie, and the second Lie with an Imprecation, and that Imprecation with a constant Affeſeration of the ſame Falſhood! How hath one ill Word brought in another! And how hath the Neglect of Charity, provok'd thee at laſt to Malice and Injuriousneſs!

66. *And as ſoon as it was Day, the Elders of the People, and Chief Priests, and the Scribes, came together, and led him into their Council.*

**W**HAT haſte do theſe Men make to ruin their immortal Souls! For fear they ſhould not dye their Souls with a Guilt deep enough, they get up early. And do not theſe Mens Proceedings put thee in mind, O my Soul, of the Haſte thou haſt made to everlaſting Deſtruction! How early haſt thou got up to offend thy God! How often haſt thou begun the Day with vain and ſinful Thoughts! How often hath the firſt Word thou haſt ſpoken in the Morning, been an ill Name, or an angry

angry Expression! How often hast thou made it thy first Contrivance in the Morning, how to be reveng'd on such a Person; and, as soon as it hath been Day, hast gone and executed thy premeditated Malice! And hast not thou done so as to other Sins? How early in a Morning have thy Lusts ingross'd thy Thoughts, as if thy first Thoughts and Actions had been the Devil's Due, and that God were to have his Leavings?

67. *Saying, Art thou the Christ? Tell us. And he said unto them, If I tell you, you will not believe.*

AND hath not this been thy Temper, O my Soul? How often hath God told thee, that thou art in Danger, and yet thou would'st not believe! How often hath he assur'd thee, that thou can'st have no Share, no Benefit in Christ's Merits, except thou repentest, and yet thou would'st not believe! How often hast thou been told, that Christ dy'd, that thou mightest die to Sin, and yet thou would'st not believe! How often hath the Spirit of God endeavour'd to convince thee, that except thou dost examine thy self, whether thou art in the Faith or no, thou can'st not be sure of Salvation, and yet thou would'st not believe him! Oh, how often hath it been proclaim'd in thy Ears, that thou can'st not love God, except thou prefer his Will before thy Gain of Pleasure, and yet thou would'st not believe! And whom could'st thou blame, if God should condemn thee as an Unbeliever, who hast resisted the known Truths of his most holy Oracles?

68. *And if I also ask you, you will not answer me, nor let me go.*

T HUS hast thou dealt with thy Conscience, O my Soul! Thou hast neither permitted it to  
censure



censure thy Actions, nor suffer'd it to ask thee any Question. When thou hast done something amiss, and it hath check'd thee, how hast thou dash'd its Reprehensions! When it hath condemn'd thy Pride and Censoriousness, how hast thou bid it meddle with its own Business! How often would it have ask'd thee, which Way thou hop'st to be sav'd, and thou hast turn'd away from the Motion! How often hath it been ready to demand of thee, whether the Courses thou takest, are agreeable to the Rules of the Gospel, and thou hast presently diverted the Suggestion! Nay, how often hath it expostulated with thee, why no Warning, no Threatning could prevail with thee, and thou hast put it off, like *Felix*, to come and discourse with thee another Day, when thou art more at leisure!

*69. Hereafter shall the Son of Man sit on the right Hand of the Power of God.*

**O** My Soul, thou hast been, in a manner, as confident of thy sitting at the right Hand of God, as Christ himself, yet without any solid Ground! Oh, how ready hast thou been to apply the Promises of the Gospel, without regarding whether thou didst fulfil the requir'd Conditions! How often hast thou flatter'd thy self, that thou shalt see God in Glory, when, at the same Time, thou hast liv'd in Sins, which exclude Men from the Kingdom of Heaven! See thro' what Sufferings the Son of God enters into his Glory; and can'st thou think thou shalt reign with him, except thou suffer with him? Before he took Possession of his Kingdom, he fought his Way thro' all Oppositions; and can'st thou hope to be conformable to him in Bliss, except thou art content to be conformable to him in his Work and Labour of Love?

70. *Then said they all, Art thou then the Son of God?  
And he said unto them, Ye say that I am.*

**T**HIS Question, which the Priests and Elders among the *Jews* put captiously to our Master, the Lord *Jesus*, I have Reason, O my Soul, to put to thee in good earnest: Art thou a Child of God, or not? If thou art, what mean the Vanities thou doteſt upon? What means that Fondneſs of the World, that fills the Channels of thy Heart? What means thy Averſeneſs from imitating the Primitive Saints in their Self-denials? If thou art a Child of God, why wilt not thou be governed by the Spirit of God? Why hath thy ſensual Appetite ſo much Power over thee? And why art thou ſo loth to be Holy, as thy Father in Heaven is Holy; if the Actions of a Child of God are no part of thy Life, how dwells thy Heavenly Father's Nature in thee? And when all the Children of God muſt ſtrive to have the ſame Mind in them, which was in the Son of God, how comes thy Mind to be ſo carnal, and ſo wedded to Things below?

71. *And they ſaid, What need we any farther Witneſs?  
For we our ſelves have heard it of his own Mouth.*

**W**HAT theſe Men ſay maliciously of Chriſt; God may too truly ſay of thee, O my Soul! What need is there of any farther Witneſs, when thine own Mouth bears Witneſs againſt thee? Wert thou to appear before the great Tribunal at this Inſtant, how juſtly might God condemn thee by thine own Confeſſions? How juſtly might he ſay to thee, Thou didſt confeſs that Heaven is not to be got with a Wiſh: Why then wouldſt not thou beſtow more Care and Pains about it? Thou didſt confeſs, that thou canſt do any thing in the World

for Profit sake, sit up at Night, Work hard, go tedious Journeys, put thy self to a great deal of Trouble for a Sum of Mony: Why then wouldst not thou bestir thy self for far greater Profit, even an Eternity of Joy and Glory? Thou didst confess, that he that would not Work, deserved not to Eat, and how then canst thou expect to enjoy the Bread of Life, even my everlasting Kingdom, when thou didst not care for Working; and couldst do more for Twenty or Forty Shillings, than for the everlasting Riches?



The





## The XXIII. Chapter of St. *Luke's* Gospel Paraphrased.

1. *And the whole Multitude of them arose, and led him to Pilate.*

**A**Mong this Multitude, no doubt, were some who formerly cried *Hosannah to the Son of David*: But how variable is Mankind in their Devotion! And, O my Soul, dost not thou see thy self in this Glass? How fickle and inconstant hast thou been in thy Religious Temper! Sometimes Fire, then Ice again; sometimes Hot, then Cold again; sometimes diligent in Prayer, then careless and supine again: And is this agreeable to thy great Master's Temper, who loved thee to the End? Should thy God love thee at this rate; love thee to Day, and forsake thee to Morrow, where wouldst thou hide thy Head in the Day of Battle?

2. *And they began to accuse him, saying, we found this Fellow perverting the Nation, and forbidding to give Tribute to Cæsar; saying, That he himself is Christ, a King.*

**T**HIS was nothing but a downright Lye; for he had not only paid Tribute for himself and Peter, but charged the Spies that were sent unto him, to give to Cæsar the Things that were Cæsar's:

But their Interest is maintain'd by the Untruth, and therefore they make nothing of the Sin. O my Soul, how little hast thou stood upon a Lye, when thy Interest hath seemed to require it! And to clear thy self, how regardless hast thou been of speaking Truth of thy Neighbour and thy self! How little hast thou regarded the God of Truth, whose Eyes were upon thee, and who saw the Falshood and Perverseness of thine Heart! Thou hadst need, for the future, redeem thy Time, and speak the Truth from thy Heart, whatever thou sufferest and lovest by it: And let a good Conscience be ever dearer to thee, than the Breath and good Opinion of Men: *For mark the perfect Man, and behold the Upright; the End of that Man is Peace.*

3. *And Pilate asked him, Art thou the King of the Jews? And he answered him, and said, Thou sayest it.*

**H**OW often, O my Soul, hath Christ asked thee this Question, *Am not I thy King?* Thou hast, indeed, answered with thy Lips, *That he is:* But how far hath thy Heart been from him, and how loth hast thou been to be govern'd by him? How boldly hast thou sometimes thrown off his Yoke, and how unwilling hast thou been, that *this Man should reign over thee?* Canst thou have a better Prince to rule thy Thoughts, and Words, and Actions? Did ever any miscarry under his Rule? And canst thou think, thou shalt?

4. *Then said Pilate to the Chief Priest, and to the People, I find no fault in this Man.*

**A**N Heathen finds no fault in Christ Jesus: Yet, hast not thou, O my Soul, found fault with him, when thou hast disputed his Precepts, thought them hard and troublesome, and his Commandments

mandments grievous? Hast not thou blamed him in so doing, when thou hast thought that he hath not consulted thine Ease, nor considered thy Circumstances, and tied thee up to hard Meat; hath not this been harbouring strange Thoughts of him? Can he that is the Fountain of Wisdom, do any thing that is irrational? Or canst thou think he did not design thy Good, when he commanded that which crosses the Inclinations of Flesh and Blood? And ought not this to make thee say to him for the future, *Speak, Lord, for thy Servant hears?*

5. *And they were the more fierce, saying, He stirreth up the People; teaching throughout all Jury; beginning from Galilee to this place.*

**A**ND must thy stirring up the Souls of Men to love their God, my dearest Lord, be called Sedition! Oh, then let there be such Sedition, and such Uproars, in my Soul. Let there be a perpetual Contrariety betwixt the Flesh and the Spirit in me, that my Spirit may never yield to the evil Motions of the Flesh: Stir up my Soul, to stand up for thy Honour and Glory: Commence a War within me, whereby I may be engaged to fight for him, who hath redeemed me from the Power of the Grave, and given me a Title to Immortality.

6. *When Pilate heard of Galilee, he asked, whether the Man were a Galilean?*

**A** Galilean was a Nick-name: And when the Jesus called one a Galilean, they meant an inconsiderable Person. How meanly doth Pilate speak of thee my blessed Jesus! But he knew thee not. Had he been sensible of thy Divinity, he would not only have spoken of thee with the highest Respect and Veneration, and fallen down be-



fore thee ; but wonder'd at the Mystery, that the Creator should thus suffer himself to be abused by his Creatures ; and be content to be made an Object of their Scorn, whose Souls and Bodies he might have lash'd with eternal Fire. Ignorance wanders in the Dark, and passes by that Medicine which is of greatest Use, and yields the greatest Comfort. Oh, drive that Darkness from my Mind ; and let me know nothing with that Delight and Satisfaction, as I do thee, my Jesus, thee my Crucified Redeemer.

7. *And as soon as he knew that he belonged to Herod's Jurisdiction, he sent him to Herod, who himself was also at Jerusalem at that time.*

**P**ilate intended to have Herod's Opinion of Christ. Which was just as if two blind Men should judge of Colours, or pretend to guide one another ; by which Attempt they both fall into the Ditch. O Jesu ! What could Herod judge of thee, that knew not thy glorious Designs, nor had any knowledge of thy Spiritual Kingdom ! The Things of the Spirit are Foolishness to the Natural Man. So they have been to me : Before I knew what the Riches of thy Grace were, I had strange thoughts of Holiness, and I looked upon it as a needless thing. I prize it now ; Thanks be to thee, who hast open'd mine Eyes, and not suffer'd me to continue in the Shadow and Valley of Death.

8. *And when Herod saw Jesus, he was exceeding glad ; for he was desirous to see him of a long Season, because he had heard many things of him, and he hoped to have seen some Miracle done by him.*

**S**URE, this Man knew not what a Miracle was, nor the End for which those wonderful Works were

were wrought. Could the vain King think my blessed Lord, that thou didst work Miracles to make Men Sport; which were the Seals of Heaven affixed to thy sacred Doctrine? O Lord, I long not to see thy former Miracles wrought over again; only one Miracle I beg thou wouldst work in me, and turn my Heart of Stone into an Heart of Flesh, and expel the Leprosy of Sin out of my Soul; which if thou wilt grant, *I will speak of thy marvellous Acts, and my Mouth shall shew forth thy Praise; In the Congregations of the Saints will I bless thee.*

9. *Then he questioned with him in many Words; but he answered him nothing.*

**N**O doubt, the Questions were trivial, and below the Gravity and Holiness of my Saviour. Had he asked, *What he should do to be saved?* None would have given a speedier Answer. O my Jesus. How wouldst thou have embraced the Opportunity, and received the inquisitive Man with the same Tenderness that thou didst the humble Publican! But the Questions, no doubt, were mean and ridiculous, and such as Men put to Fortune-tellers: They deserved no Answer. By thy Silence, O my Lord, thou teachest me how to behave myself upon the like Occasions; when Men ask impertinent Questions about Religion, with an Intent rather to Cavil, than to be edified: In such Cases, let me keep my Mouth as with a Bridle; but let my Lips be ever open, and ready to give an Answer to every Man that doth ask me a reason of the Hope that is in me, with Meekness and Fear.

10. *And the Chief Priests and Scribes stood, and vehemently accused him.*

**W**HAT could they accuse thee of, O thou King of Saints! All that they could charge thee with, was, That thou hadst healed the Sick, and cured their Blind, and dispossessed their Demoniacs, and taught them the Way to Eternal Happiness. And was this a Crime, which Men of Ingenuity would have thought the greatest Mercy? But Envy draws the Goodness it sees in others, with a very black and sower Face; and because it self springs from Hell, derives the sweetest Actions of its Neighbours from the same Original. O my Lord, do but in my Soul what thou hast done in Judea, and I will own thee as the Author and Fountain of my Happiness. Let Envy and Strife die in my Soul, that Confusion and every evil Work may die there too; and my Heart may become an Habitation of Peace, for the Prince of Peace to rest in for ever.

11. *And Herod, with his Men of War, set him at nought, and mocked him, and arrayed him in a gorgeous Robe, and sent him again to Pilate.*

**G**REAT Indignity! To dress him like a Fool, and then to send him with the Noise and Hissings of the People about him, through the Streets back again to Pilate! What Patience was here! Who, among the Children of Men, that had Power in his Hand to be revenged on such Contempt, would have born this with Equanimity? For there goes nothing nearer the Heart, than Contempt; especially in Persons Innocent and Great: But not the least Discontent is seen or heard in thee, under all this Mockery, my dearest Lord. It was to shew me an Example; and to let me see, that there is no

walking



walking to Heaven on Carpets, and a Foot-cloth. It was an Act Great and Heroick; and Heaven, that judged of thy Patience and Contentedness, saw greater Valor in that Act, than in all the Martial Enterprizes of Herod and his Soldiers. Lord make me ambitious of the same Conquest: And let me never think my self to be like thee, 'till my Passions be subdued to Faith and Reason.

12. *And the same Day Pilate and Herod were made Friends together; for before they were at Enmity between themselves.*

**A** Strange Friendship, which is made by dishonouring God, and hath Sin and Impiety for its Foundation! Such Friendship the World is acquainted with; and Men become Friends one to another, because they agree in committing Sins much of the same Nature and Size. This makes Drunkards kind: And one ill Man takes the other to be his Friend, because he wills and nills the same. Two Carnal Humours are alike gratified; each counts Virtue needless or burthensome, but Sin and Extravagance is the Diversion and Business of both. O my Soul, come not thou into their Secret: Unto their Assembly, mine Honour, be not thou united. But thy Friendship, sweet Jesus, is that my Soul longs for: If thou be my Friend, I need no more. Thou art more than all the Friends I have in the World. Where-ever I am, be thou my Friend; while I live, when I die, when I leave this World, and when my Soul must appear before thy Tribunal; and I shall never be confounded.

And

19. And Pilate, when he had called together the Chief Priests, and the Rulers, and the People.

**H**E calls both Priests and People together, because they were of one Mind. Men agree more in Sin than in Goodness; and Wickedness unites them more than Religion. O Jesu! If all Men would tread in thy Steps, and follow thy Precepts, what an happy World would there be! Yet, even those that pretend to be of thy Religion, hate one another, and are divided more than *Jews* and *Infidels*. Oh, when shall that happy Day come, that we shall all be of one Heart, and of one Soul! No Religion, gives greater or better Rules for Charity and Union, than that which thou hast taught Mankind. Oh, give me that Charity that bears all things, and endureth all things: Unite my Heart unto thee, that I may fear thy Name: Plant thine own sweet Temper in me, that I may reign with thee for ever.

He said unto them, Ye have brought this Man unto me, as one that perverts the People: And behold, I have examined him before you, and have found no fault in this Man, touching those things whereof ye accuse him.

**H**OW doth this Man labour to convince the wicked *Jews* of their Error! O my blessed Master! What Pains hast thou taken with me, to convince me of my Faults, and I have, notwithstanding, been loth to know them! What Checks hast thou given me for my Pride and Passion; and I have drown'd them, and passed them by, without taking Notice of them! When I have neglected a Duty, how hast thou, by Suggestions, and setting the Examples of thy Saints before me, endeavour'd

deavour'd to withdraw me from my Omission! Oh, let me frustrate thy Pains no more: Let it not be said, that I was deaf to thy Admonitions. When thou drawest me, let me follow thee: When thou ledest me, let me walk in the Way thou chusest for me; that I may come at last to enjoy thee with thy Saints, and those who through Patience have inherited thy Promises.

15. *No, nor yet Herod; for I sent you to him, and lo, nothing worthy of Death is done of him.*

**O** Blessed Saviour! Even thine Enemies must justify thee. Thy Innocence was so bright and illustrious, that Impiety it self could not charge thee with any Error. And when even thy Foes do vindicate thy Cause, I that pretend to be thy Friend, must not be backward to assert thy Honour and Glory. Let me justify thee by my Actions; and believe, that I cannot honour thee more, than by adorning thy Doctrine in all things. Let my good Works bear Witness that I honour thee; and, in the midst of a crooked and perverse Generation, let me sanctify thee in my Heart and Life; that whereas Men speak Evil of me, as of an Evil-doer, they may be ashamed that falsely accuse my good Conversation in *Christ Jesus*.

16. *I will therefore chastise him, and release him.*

**H**E had not deserved so much as Chastisement, yet the Judge being desirous to save him from the greater Danger, inflicts this upon him for a Shew, rather than out of Malice. Even wicked Men sometimes have good Desires and Purposes; so had I before I knew thee, my dearest Lord; but those Purposes came to nothing. I purposed often to mend my Life, but Temptations were stronger than my Purposes;



Purposes; and when they came, I fell. This Sickness, Lord, I am still apt to fall into; and though by thy Grace I act sometimes according to my good Intentions and Resolutions, yet how often do I miscarry in this Point! Lord, give me not only good Inclinations, but Courage to perform them too. Oh! Let me not think it enough to entertain good Wishes in my Soul, but make them so strong, that the Good I intend and purpose, may break forth like the Sun from a Cloud, into a perfect Day.

17. *For of necessity he must release one unto them at the Feast.*

**W**hen the Paschal Lamb was to be killed, the Jews, had a Prisoner released to confirm the Memory of their Deliverance from the House of Bondage. O Lamb of God! When thou diedst, thou openedst the Prison-door, for all Mankind to come out: Thou didst proclaim Liberty to all Men, captivated by Sin and the Devil. O wonderful Release! This makes me admire how Men, after this Liberty procured for them by thy Death, should yet be fond of their Prisons still, and delight in Slavery, and the Bondage of Iniquity. Oh! Bring my Soul out of Prison, that I may praise thy Name. The Righteous shall compass me about, when thou shalt deal bountifully with me.

18. *And they cried out all at once, saying, Away with this Man, and release unto us Barabbas.*

**A** Monstrous Choice! To prefer a Man before a God, a Son of Death before the Lord of Life, a Malefactor before Innocence itself, a Murderer before the Saviour of the World; Darkness before Light, a Villain before the Son of God! Yet, blessed

sed Jesu, such a sad Choice I have made too often, when I have preferred the Cares of the World before the better Part? And while I have condemned these wicked Men, and been in a kind of Passion to see and hear of their Impiety, have unawares sunk into this Sin myself, by preferring a Trifle before thy Will, and a foolish Satisfaction before Rest in thy Bosom, and an Interest in thy Favour; and the Things of this World, before a more glorious Reversion in another Life. I Pardon my desperate Choice: And let me henceforward prefer thee, who art fairer than the Children of Men, before all that my Flesh doth promise, or the World give. For one thing is needful, even thy Love of Complacency; and if I have that it shall not be taken away from me.

19. *Who for a certain Sedition made in the City, and for Murther was cast in Prison.*

**P**RISONS are fit Places for Malefactors, not only upon the Account of securing Human Societies from Enemies; but also because such Sinners, being removed from Temptations and Objects that enticed them to do ill, and under pressure, may think of God, and reflect upon their wicked Lives, and come to a sincere Repentance: Yet when they are delivered out of their Durance, their Lives very often are the same that formerly they were. O my dear Redeemer! Thou hast made me a Prisoner sometimes by Sickness, and other Disasters, in hopes that the Affliction might work upon me, and the Fire I was in would make me a new Man; yet when thou hast freed me from this Prison, I have re-assumed my former Liberty in sinning: Oh, let it be so no more. And seeing I am made whole, let me take heed, and Sin no more, lest worse things happen unto me.

20. Pilate

20. *Pilate therefore, willing to release Jesus, spake again to them.*

**H**ERE I see greater Charity and Tenderness in an Heathen, than in those who had the lively Oracles of God. What a strange Sight is this, to see *Uncircumcision*, which is by Nature fulfilling the Law, judge them who by the Letter and Circumcision do transgress the Law! How many excellent Acts of Virtue do I see, and read of, in mere Pagans, that had nothing but the Light of Nature to direct them; Acts which I do not come up to, that have the Light of Heaven to shine upon me! O *Jesu*, make me ashamed of my Backwardness; and let my Righteousness exceed that of Men, which do not call upon thy Name, lest it be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon in that Day, than for me.

21. *But they cried, saying, Crucifie him, Crucifie him.*

**T**HIS was the most infamous Punishment that any Man could be condemn'd to. Ah, Wretches! Did not your Hearts smite you when you said so? Will nothing serve you, but the most ignominious Death; a Death, which none but Slaves were destin'd to? What a brutish thing is Wrath and Anger? It stops its Ears against all common Ingenuity and Reason: It doth things in haste, which must be repented of by leisure. Lord *Jesu*! I remember what unreasonable things I have done when my Passion hath been up, things I am ashamed of now. Oh, leave me not to these Winds and Tempests! Oh, let me learn of thee, for thou art meek and lowly in Heart, that I may find Rest for my Soul.

22. *And*



22. *And he said unto them the third time, Why, what Evil hath he done? I have found no Cause of Death in him. I will therefore chastise him, and let him go.*

O Jesus! 'Tis very true, thou hast done no Evil, neither was Guile found in thy Mouth: When thou wast reviled, thou didst not revile again; when thou sufferdest, thou threatnedst not: Thou wentest about, doing good; no Man could convince thee of any Sin: Thou wast Good, and didst Good, even to those that now cryed *Crucifie him*: Thou camest to discourage Men from Evil; it was thy Province to destroy the Works of the Devil, and to make Men Partakers of the Divine Nature. Goodness was in thy Nature, and all thy Actions breathed of it. Thou wast tender of Men's Good, of the Good of their Souls and Bodies: Oh, make me conformable to thy Goodness! Let me abhor that which is Evil, and cleave to that which is Good. Let thy Goodness be my Pattern, and let me ever rejoyce in thy Goodness. Make me steadily and invincibly Good, Good unto Death, that I may receive a Crown of Life. Thy Goodness endures for ever: Give mine the same Duration: Oh, touch it with thy Light, and it shall burn bright for ever.

23. *And they were instant with loud Voices, requiring that he might be crucified; and the Voices of them and the Chief Priests prevailed.*

THE Devil was let loose in these Sinners; and see how he rages! He makes them leap Boggs, and Ditches, and a Thousand Precipices, to get their Wills accomplished. The Damned in Hell were not more outrageous than these Men. Lord Jesus! What are we, when left to ourselves, or to the Power of the Enemy! Thou camest to redeem me

me from this Power : Oh, let me come under it no more. Once I dwelt under that Tyranny : I now serve a gentler Master. Oh, let me serve thee, not with Eye-service, as a Man-pleaser ; but as a Servant of God, doing the Will of God from the Heart.

24. *And Pilate gave Sentence, that it should be as they required.*

**T**Hese Brutes threaten to accuse him to the Emperor, of Mis-government, and of Unfaithfulness to his Master ; and that turns the Scale, and tempts him to change his Resolution. In this Misdemeanor, Lord, I read my own. Thus hath Profit and Gain, and Fear of losing the Favour of Men, changed my good and pious Purposes. When I have thought to reprove a Person greater than myself, fear of drawing his Frowns upon me, hath made me give over those Religious Thoughts. When I have resolved not to comply with a sinful Design or Proposal made to me, how hath the Temptation of a considerable Advantage turned the Byass ! Oh, make this Fickleness and Inconstancy very odious to me ! And let me count nothing Gain, that is accompanied with the loss of thy Favor : Let that be dearer to me than Gold ; yea, dearer than fine Gold ; and let me hate every false Way.

25. *And he released unto them him who for Sedition and Murder was cast into Prison, whom they had desired ; but he delivered Jesus to their Will.*

**H**OW pleasing is sinful Nature, when its wicked Desires are gratified ; when it obtains its Wishes, and gets Possession of what it craved with Eagerness ! It fancies it drinks Nectar and Cordials, though in good Truth, it is nothing but Poyson.

No doubt, the Apple, or Fruit, our first Parents eat of, seemed very delicious; but it appeared soon after, that they had swallowed Death, and God's Indignation. Such Sweetness have I dreamed of in committing Sin! And how have my Senses been tickled, when I have enjoyed the dangerous Meat my Appetite long'd for! But it hath proved very bitter in my Bowels. Thus the unwary Fish swallows the Bait, but knows not that the Hook, which will certainly kill it, lies under it. O Jesus! My Desires never move more orderly, than when they move within the Sphere and Circle of thy Law, Oh, charm them to that Circle, and I shall never Perish!

26. *And as they led him away, they laid hold upon one Simon a Cyrenian coming out of the Country, and on him they laid the Cross, that he might bear it after Jesus.*

**H**appy Man! That was counted Worthy to bear the Cross with the Lord Jesus! How light did the Burthen seem to him, when Jesus was at one end of it! So thy Holy Apostles, my dearest Lord, thought themselves bless'd, that they were counted worthy to suffer Shame for thy Name. How contented shall I be under any Affliction, did I believe, that thou art with me, and help'st to bear my Load! Surely, thou art not far off, when the Cross is laid upon my Shoulder. In all my Afflictions, thou art afflicted, O let me think of it, and be chearful under it! I know thou layest on me for my Good, and art touch'd with the feeling of my Infirmities! Let me have no hard Thought of any Trouble, for I suffer in thy Company! Shall I think much of the Burthen, when thou endurest far greater for my sake? In all my Distresses be thou with me, and convince me, that thou art so;

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that



that I may never repine, never murmur, never fret, but may bear thy Yoak with a willing Mind, being confident I shall not be a loser by it; but when I am tried, receive the Crown of Righteousness, which thou hast promised to all that love thy Name!

27. *And there follow'd him a great company of People, and of Women, which also bewailed and lamented him.*

**T**ENDERNESS and COMPASSION to Persons in distress is a Tribute that Nature requires; and to have denied it thee in thy Sufferings, my blessed Lord, had been barbarous! Those that followed thee, and wept, did not know, how Great and Good thou wert. If they had, their Tears had been turn'd into Blood. They believ'd the Innocent, that makes them wet their Cheeks; but had they known that thou wert the Son of God, the dearly beloved of the eternal Father, they would have wish'd, that their Heads were Fountains of Water. O that I could never think of the Cross without Tears in mine Eyes! O that I could never behold thee bleeding in thy Holy Sacrament without deep Compunction! Lord! Touch the Rock of my Heart, that the Waters may flow to the everlasting Comfort of my Soul!

28. *But Jesus turning unto them, said, Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves, and for your Children.*

**L**ORD JESU! Thou sawest what Miseries were coming upon that Nation, and art concern'd for them more than thou art for thyself! In all thy Sufferings thou didst not consult thine own Welfare so much as ours! It was for our sakes, it was for my

my sake, that thou didst endure the Torments which fell upon thee! Thou wast loth I should perish, and therefore wouldst rather die, than I should be undone! Thy Father's Wrath was levell'd at me, and thou stepst in, and tookest the Blow, that I might escape! The Curse of the Law was pronounc'd against me, who was the Offender! Thou wentst into the midst of the Fire, that I might not be burnt! The Floods went high, and their Commission was to drown me; thou ventur'dst into that Sea, and didst divide the Waters, that I might go thro' the midst and be safe! And if this Mercy does not melt my Affections, and make them thine, how unexcusable must I make myself! O let these Thoughts for ever dwell in my Mind, that I may live as becomes the Gospel of Christ, and may think no Service so sweet as thine.

29. *For behold, the days are coming, in the which they shall say, Blessed are the Barren, and the Wombs that never bare, and the Paps which never gave Suck.*

**T**Hese were the Days of *Jerusalem's* Destruction, than which, never worse Times were seen, and Men and Women wished, that they had never been born. Lord, thou would'st have me prepare for the worst of Times, that when they come, I may not be surpriz'd, but know where to flee for Refuge! Sweet *Jesus*! Teach me how to prepare for the Evil to come, that it may not touch me, or if it touch me, it may not hurt me. To be always Good, always Watchful, always doing thy Will, is the way to be always safe, even then when the Earth is moved, and all things are turned upside down, when the Sea rages, when the Waters thereof roar, and be troubled, and the Mountains shake with the swelling thereof: Let me ever preserve a pure Heart, and a good Conscience, and a Faith unfeigned, that

however thou disposest of things in this World, I may not lose the Felicity of that which is to come!

30. *Then shall they begin to say to the Mountains, fall on us, and to the Hills, cover us.*

**W**Hen Men have forsaken God, and his Judgments break forth upon them, how do they lay hold on every Bull-rush to save themselves from Ruin! What good can Hills or Mountains do, when God is Angry? They cannot hide from the Wrath of God! Thus it will be in the great Day of Judgment, of which the Destruction of *Jerusalem* was an Emblem! When Men shall see the frowning Judge, whom they have offended, what Tremblings will invade them! How will they quake for Fear! What pitiful Shifts will they betake themselves to! But all in vain. O let that dreadful Day be ever before mine Eyes! Let the future Shrieks and Groans of impenitent Sinners, even now in this my Day, sound in mine Ears, that I may be frightened from Sin; O let me think what their Ways will end in, and turn my Feet away from their Paths! O let me not follow their pernicious ways, that I may not be condemn'd with the World.

31. *For if they do these things in a green Tree, what shall be done in a dry?*

**J**udgment must begin at the House of God; and if it first begin at us, what shall the End be of them that obey not the Gospel of God? And if the Righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the Ungodly and Sinner appear! God is resolved to judge the World, and even the best shall have a taste of his Justice. The Afflictions that befall the Good in this World, are but the beginnings of his Indignation against Sin, and by the Blood of Christ they



they shall be saved from the Wrath to come. But if these be the beginnings of God's Anger, what will the progress of his Justice be, and where will it end? O blessed Saviour! How fearful will the End of all ungodly Sinners be! If I must be afflicted, O let me have my share of it in this World, that I may not sink under the burden of thine Indignation hereafter.

32. *And there were also two other Malefactors led with him to be put to Death.*

**W**Hat an Opportunity had these Wretches to save their Souls, even at the last Moment of their Lives! An Opportunity, the like of which never was before, nor ever will be. Here was an happy Day for them, to have secured Christ's Favour, who would not have denied his Grace to them, had they been but willing to accept of it, upon this extraordinary occasion. Kings and Princes bestow extraordinary Acts of Grace at their Coronation, or upon some remarkable Solemnity. Now had been the time for these Malefactors to have laid hold on Eternal Life, which they never had any hope of before. But how do Men let slip the Opportunities God puts in their Hands! So have I, my blessed Jesus, many a time, when I have been in a good frame, when thou hast put good Thoughts and Resolutions in my Heart, what Opportunities had I to make my self for ever! But I have return'd to the love of the World, despised these Opportunities of Grace, and justly deserved, thou shouldst deny them me for ever! Dear Saviour! Visit me once more with thy Salvation, with the Day-spring from on High, and I will admit thy Beams into my Soul, that I may be enlighten'd, edified, sanctified, and preserv'd for ever!

33. *And when they were come to the place which is called Calvary, there they Crucified him, and the Malefactors, one on the right hand, and the other on the left.*

**H**ere begins the Act, at which Heaven and Earth stood amaz'd! What a Spectacle was here! The Son of God nail'd to the Cross, and hanging betwixt Two Thieves! Did not the Hands of the Soldiers, that nail'd the Saviour of the World to the Cross tremble? Did not their Hearts fail them, when they tied him to the Tree? No, their Hearts were Flint and Adamant. No other could have been engaged in the Service. O wonderful Stupidity! They knew not what Flesh they touch'd. They knew not it was a Body fram'd by the Holy Ghost, and the Fruit of the Virgin's Womb! Here, O my Soul, here the Work of thy Redemption is commenc'd! O look upon the Heavenly Creature that hangs here, and think what Riches are treasured up in his Cross! Here he shew'd himself a Mediator indeed, hanging in the middle, betwixt a Penitent and a Prodigal, betwixt Heaven and Earth, betwixt the Living and the Dead! They Crucified him! What did the Angels think, to see their Lord and Master thus used! What dost thou think of it, O my Soul! Job's Friends seeing the Greatness of his Misery, sate silent by him in the Dust Seven Days. Look, O my Soul, upon this Object, sit silent, and admire, for thy Lord's Grief is great.

34. *Then said Jesus, Father forgive them, for they know not what they do.*

**L**ord Jesus! What a Miracle of Mercy dost thou work here! I know not, which is the greater Wonder, thou didst formerly, when conversant

versant on the Earth, or that which I see now perform'd on the Cross. To pray for Men, who had abused thee to a Prodigy! To beg of thy Father to forgive their Insolencies, and not to exclude them from the possibility of Repentance! Can I think of this, and not believe, that this was to teach me how I must behave my self towards those that have done me wrong? Canst thou forgive such Injuries, and shall not I forgive them that trespass against me? One would have thought, that these Affronts and Indignities, which were offer'd to thee, would never have been forgiven! yet they are no sooner offer'd, but thou interceedest for their Remission! O let no Injury that's henceforward offer'd me, seem too big for Pardon! O let me freely pass by the Offence committed against me, that my Father, which is in Heaven, may forgive me my Trespases.

34. *And they parted his Garments, and cast Lots.*

**WHAT** a rich Spoil did these Soldiers get, and they knew it not! If a good Christian, that understood the great Mystery of Godliness, had got such a Treasure, how would he have valu'd it! What Joy, what Comfort would it have been to such a Soul! Not that there is any great Virtue in the Clothes of the Son of God; A Man might have kept them, and yet by leading an ill Life, have perish'd eternally; but who would not have preserved these precious Relicks, if he had known what Person it was that wore them! It would have done him good to have look'd upon them; and admirable Reflections he might have made upon them! But to Men that knew not God, these things were of no value. O my Soul! Thou hast not priz'd the good things thy God hath bequeathed to thee. How little hast thou valued the Means of Grace thy Saviour left behind him! Henceforward learn



to make a better Use of them, that they may be Health to thy Navel, and Marrow to thy Bones.

35. *And the People stood, beholding; and the Rulers also, with them, derided him, saying, He saved others: Let him save himself, if he be Christ, the Chosen of God.*

**I**T could not but cause strange Admiration, to see him who had been known to be a Prophet, mighty in Word and Deed, come to such a doleful and dreadful End! But for any Man to be so impudent, as to deride him in his Misery, this was extraordinary bold and insolent. Yet, Men that have done a very ill thing, think themselves obliged to justify it by their Gestures and Actions; partly to keep themselves from Reproach, and partly to quiet their unruly and tumultuous Consciences. O my Soul! dread these things, as Hell-fire; and let not Sin reign in thy mortal Body, lest thou be tempted to stand in it, and to think well of it, and defend it, and by that means make thy Case desperate, and thy Disease remediless and irrecoverable.

36. *And the Soldier also mocked him, coming to him and offering him Vinegar.*

**T**O give a dying Man Vinegar, is, to increase his Torment, and mocking of his Misery. To add Affliction to Affliction, hath been counted inhuman by most Nations. How like Beasts and Brutes doth want of Religion make Men! Nothing makes them act more rationally than Religion. Religion is the Image of God; and he that practiseth it, cannot but be like God. O my Jesus! Give me such a Sense of it, that it may shine through my Actions, and People may see whose Child I am. Oh,

Oh, when shall my brutish, my beastly Affections die! When shall I imitate my Father which is in Heaven; and act like a Person who hath a Soul infused from above, the Gift of the Father of Lights, with whom there is no Variableness, nor Shadow of turning!

37. *And saying, If thou be the King of the Jews, save thy self.*

**A** Frothy Humour, to what Inconveniencies doth it lead Men! It makes them speak ill of God before they are aware; and while they give way to their Jest, they very often affront Religion, and Holiness, that is its individual Companion. O my Saviour! Give me a serious Temper, gravity of Behaviour, sobriety of Speech, discretion in my Words, and considerateness in my Carriage. Let me not dare to offend thee, to please Men; nor attempt to make the Company I am in merry, with breaking Jest upon things, at which the holy Angels Tremble.

38. *And a Superscription also was written over him in Letters of Greek and Latin, and Hebrew, This is the King of the Jews.*

**H**OW doth God concur with the Actions of sinful Men, contrary to their Designs and Purposes! Pilate, when he writ this Title over the Cross, in all these Languages, perhaps did it only to gratify his Humour; but God so directed it, that all Nations intimated by those Languages, might read there, that this Jesus was the Saviour of all the World; and that no Nation was excluded from a Title to the Merits of his Cross and Passion. O Jesus! thou art no respecter of Persons: But in every Nation, whosoever serves thee, and works Righteous-

Righteousness, is accepted of thee. As poor, as mean, as inconsiderable as I am, yet if my Heart be upright toward thee, thou wilt receive me, and love me. Oh, give me such an Heart as thou delightest to dwell in. And if thou art in me, I shall possess a Treasure, which the Moth cannot corrupt, and Thieves cannot steal away.

39. *And one of the Malefactors which were hanged, railed on him, saying, If thou be Christ, save thy self.*

**W**HAT Rudeness was this! Strange! That his Misery should not make the Wretch more Modest! But this Concern was only for this present Life: All that he desired, was, to be free from his present Pain, that he might pursue his sensual Inclinations, as formerly. How may a Man's Sensuality be known by his Talk! O my Soul, look well to thy Words and Discourses. If thy Heart be touched with a sense of a future glorious Life, thy Tongue will delight to speak of it. If thou have an aversion from such Discourses, all thy Professions of eternal Life will be meer Wind and Air: *From the Abundance of the Heart, the Mouth speaks.* If Heaven and a glorious Eternity hath possessed thy Heart, thou will find Opportunities to utter thy inward Feelings of those things with thy Tongue.

40. *But the other answering, rebuked him, saying, Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same Condemnation?*

**F**riendly Reproof is a great Duty: Yet, O my Soul! how loth hast thou been to give it; and how loth hast thou been to take it, when this precious Balm hath been pour'd out upon thy Head, by a charitable Neighbour! How hast thou look'd  
upon



upon it as Gall and Wormwood! And what hard Thoughts hast thou entertained of the kind Monitor; calling him either saucy, or meddling with things that did not concern him! And how often hast thou let thy Neighbour sleep and rest in Sin, when thy fraternal Correction might have roused him from his Slumber! Oh, be humbled for this great Omission! And when a Malefactor on the Cross thinks himself oblig'd not to suffer Sin upon his Neighbour, be not thou backward to save a Soul from Death.

41. *And we, indeed, justly; for we receive the due Reward of our Deeds: But this Man hath done nothing amiss.*

**A**N humble Acknowledgment of our Sins and Demerits, is the way to God's Bosom. This is the first Discovery of this poor Man's Repentance: And he begins with the noblest Act of it; which is, seeking to draw others to a Sense of better things. In this, O my Soul, thou hast been very remiss and neglectful, even in propagating Religion, and exhorting others to see God's Face. Henceforth be more diligent in gaining Profelytes to *Christ Jesus*. And what if thy Admonition prevails not; thou hast discharged a Duty, and mayst rejoyce in having acted according to the Will of God.

42. *And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy Kingdom.*

**H**ERE is a Mind set upon Heaven, and despising the World; than which, nothing is more acceptable to God. He is content to endure Shame, Pain, Tortures, Prickings, Aches, and all the Indignities that Man can offer to him, so *Christ*

Christ will but remember him in his Kingdom. O *Jesu*, Son of God! Give me such a Mind, and Temper, which may be content with any thing, so I may but obtain a Share in the Pleasures at thy Right-hand. Let even Sword, and Famine, and Hunger and Thirst, and Nakedness, seem nothing to me, so I may but enjoy thy Embraces in the End. Assure me, and convince me, that the Afflictions of this present Life, tho' never so great, never so painful, never so lasting, never so bitter, or piercing, are not worthy to be compared with the Glory which e'er long shall be revealed in me.

43. *And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, To day thou shalt be with me in Paradise.*

**H**OW ready is Christ to cherish the Penitent, that abhors himself for his Deformity, and sees greater Beauty, and Excellency, and Satisfaction in the Ways of Holiness, and a spiritual Life, than in all the Comforts of this World. Blessed Saviour, how ready art thou to stretch forth thine Arms to such humble and contrite Spirits! Thou art readier to grant, than they to ask; and even before they cry, thou hearest them! Oh, let this be an Encouragement to me, to deplore my Sins; and to bewail mine Offences; to detest what I have been doing against thee, and to seek first thy Kingdom, and its Righteousness; now that thou art in thy Kingdom, thou mayest remember me; and when I leave this World, mayest bid me enter into my Master's Joy.

44. *And it was about the sixth Hour, and there was a darkness over all the Earth, until the ninth Hour.*

**T**HE Sun loses his Splendor at Noon! The Deed was black, and Heaven draws a Curtain

tain over it ! Yet, notwithstanding the Miracle, the greatest part of the Spectators continue obstinate ! When Mens Hearts are set upon Sin and the World, how little do even Miracles prevail ! O my Soul, how many strange Providences hast thou seen, and yet thou hast not mended thy Life upon it ! Thou hast seen Miracles of Judgment and Mercy, yet thy Heart hath been hard. Oh, learn to take more Notice of God's Dispensations ; and believe that the strange things that happen to thee and others, are Calls from Heaven, to the Inhabitants of the World to learn Righteousness.

45. *And the Sun was darken'd, and the Veil of the Temple was rent in the midst.*

**W**HAT a Motive was this to Men, to rend their Hearts ! This was a sign that God would lay the Inclosure open, and that Christ was to break down the Partition-wall, and make both Jews and Gentiles one. To this Rent thou art beholden, O my Soul ! Thy Father was an *Amorite*, and thy Mother an *Hittite* ; thy Ancestors were Heathens, and Idolaters ; by this Rent they were brought to the Light of the Gospel, and upon that account thou enjoyest the Gospel now. Remember, how unworthy of this Favour thou hast walked many Years ; and how thou hast dishonoured this Gospel with thy Life. Oh, learn to bring forth Fruits, as become the Doctrine which is according unto Godliness ; and let thy Conversation be such, as may promote God's Glory, and thine eternal Happinels.

46. *And*



46. *And when Jesus had cried with a loud Voice, he said, Father, into thy Hands I commend my Spirit. And having said thus, he gave up the Ghost.*

**N**OW the Sacrifice is offer'd; and this Death reconciles God to the sinful World! This Death, which had been so often foretold, both by the Prophets, and Christ himself, is at last accomplished; and Pardon of Sin, and the possibility of Men's arriving to eternal Life by a true Repentance, is hereby purchased! This Death puts an End to the Curse of the Law: And from this Death, O my Soul, date thy Happiness. Though wicked Men, who had an Hand in it, were the Means whereby it was effected, yet the Son of God would die; and his voluntary Death is the meritorious Cause of thy eternal Life. Oh, look upon it with Wonder and Admiration! And while thou standest amazed at it, see withal, how thou thyself mayst end thy Days. If thou livest like a Child of God, thy Father will not send thee to Hell; but, being a Father, he will stretch forth his Almighty Arms, and receive thee to himself, like a faithful Creator.

47. *Now when the Centurion saw what was done, he glorified God, saying, Certainly this was a righteous Man.*

**T**O make a right Construction of things, is the way to spiritual Wisdom. This Man justly concluded, that Heaven could not possibly shew itself so much concern'd about a Person, if he were not an extraordinary Favourite. He judg'd rationally, and this brought him to a true Knowledge of Christ, and to an open Confession and Declaration of the Sufferer's Innocence. O my Soul, consider

consider by what Miracles and Testimonies, that Truth thou professest, hath been confirmed, and conclude it is Divine. No Religion hath those Evidences of its Divinity, and Celestial Original, that the Christian hath; and coming from God, thou hast the greatest reason to believe, that all its Promises and Threatnings will be fulfill'd; and seeing that all these shall be fulfill'd, what manner of Person oughtest thou to be in all holy Conversation and Godliness?

48. *And all the People that came together to that Sight, beholding the things which were done, smote their Breasts, and returned.*

**S**Miting their Breasts was a sign of their Grief and Anger; of their Grief, because so excellent a Person had been so inhumanely butcher'd; and of their Anger, against those bloody Men that had condemn'd and executed him. See here, O my Soul, what Entertainment thou art to give thy Sins! In looking upon them, divide thy Affections betwixt Grief and Anger. Grieve, that thou hast offered so many Indignities to thy Blessed Master. Be angry with thy self, for being so base and ungrateful. Grieve, that thou hast forgotten the End for which thou wast created; and be revenged upon the Sins that caused it: And the best Revenge is this; to see, and take care, that thy Degrees of Sin be truly answered by thy degrees of Sanctification and Heavenly-mindedness.

49. *And all his Acquaintance, and the Women that followed him from Galilee, stood afar off, beholding these things.*

**T**Hough it is some Ages since Christ was crucified, yet, in imitation of the Religious Women,

men, thou mayst stand afar off, O my Soul, and behold the Spectacle still: When the Circumstances of it are left thee in Writing, and the doleful Story stands upon Record, thou canst ascend Mount *Calvary*, and see those things acted, as if thou hadst been present! And, Oh, little dost thou think, how much this Sight will edify thee! Look often upon the Cross, and thou wilt find, what a Damp it will strike upon all thy sinful Pleasures, and how little reason thou hast to hanker after those things whereof so many good Men, after they have been sensible of their Errors, have been ashamed!

50. *And behold, there was a Man, named Joseph, a Counsellor; and he was a good Man, and a just.*

**I**N the midst of Temptations God preserves this Man, though his Riches, Greatness, Reputation and Friendship of the Grandees did strongly entice him to consent to the Death of the Lord *Jesus*, yet he would not; and was resolv'd rather to hazard all, than have an Hand in the Condemnation. This was an Argument of a generous Spirit, to bear up under the strongest Assaults and Enticements in the World; and to keep an uncorrupt Soul, in the midst of Dirt and Filthiness. Thou livest in a very evil Generation, O my Soul! Dare to preserve thine Integrity, in the midst of all the Floods of Ungodliness, that surround thee. And the more thou art discouraged from Goodness and Righteousness, the more vigorously stand up for it, and maintain it; and thy God will be with thee.



51. *The same had not consented to the Counsel and Deed of them: He was of Arimathea, a City of the Jews; who also himself waited for the Kingdom of God.*

**T**O wait for the Kingdom of God, is the way to resist, and to overcome Temptations. He that is resolved not to lose his Share in God's Kingdom hereafter, will not stand upon his Losses and Crosses here; for he knows that the future Kingdom will recompense all. No Man will venture so much for Christ, as he that firmly believes the Kingdom of God, and fixes his Eye of Faith upon it. O my Jesus! Give me a clearer sight of that Kingdom, that the Kingdoms and Glories of this World may not beguile or tempt me to love the World! If I love the World, the Love of the Father cannot be in me. Represent the Beauty of thy future Kingdom to my Mind in lively Characters, that my Admiration of this present World may decay, and I may be content to sell all for the Pearl of Price that is before me.

52. *This Man went unto Pilate, and begged the Body of Jesus.*

**I**T is base to forsake a Friend, when he is under a Cloud. Then to shew our Respect to him, when he lies unjustly under Contempt and Disgrace, is true Affection. It was bold, and great, and like a Friend, to beg the Body of Jesus, when it was counted a Disgrace to be any way concern'd for him. How hast thou deviated from this admirable Example, O my Soul, when a Person, whom thou hast courted and admired in the Day of his Prosperity, hath, through the Venom of malicious Tongues, and more malicious Practices, fallen from his Glory and Respect! How hast thou with-

drawn thy self from him, been afraid to speak the Truth of him, and to give him that good Character which thou knewest he deserved! As thou dealest with Man, so, it is to be feared, thou wilt deal with thy God, and Religion, when it becomes dangerous to own them. Up, and be earnest with thy God, to give thee invincible Integrity, which may mock all Storms, and be the same to God and to thy Neighbour, in all Conditions. Stick close to God, and to thy Friend; and rejoyce in a good Conscience, for that will bring thee Peace at last.

53. *And he took it down, and wrapped it in Linnen, and laid it in a Sepulcher that was hewn in Stone, wherein never Man before was laid.*

**R**eligion is an insignificant thing, if it costs us nothing! Good Men love to be at Charges for their God, and the good of their own Souls. O my Soul! How loth hast thou been to let those Persons reap thy carnal Things, which have sown unto thee spiritual Things! When thou hast thought nothing too much for thy Luxury, and Pride, and Ease, how hath it gone against the Grain, to be expensive for Religion! Thou hast loved to serve thy God cheaply: How hast thou been to express thy Gratitude to God, by being liberal to his distressed Members, and thy spiritual Guides! Oh, learn by this Example, to prize thy spiritual Good more; and let thy bountiful Actions shew, that thou hast the highest Value for the Concerns of Eternity.

54. *And that Day was the Preparation, and the Sabbath drew on.*

**O** My Soul! How little Preparation hast thou made for the Everlasting Sabbath, and thine eternal

eternal Rest! Dost thou hope to rest for ever among the Flowers of *Paradise*, and is it not high time to prepare for it? Dost thou think to rest at last under the Wings of thy everlasting Father; and is it not time to rise, and Work, as it were for thy Life, that thou may'st find Repose in the everlasting Tabernacles? Was ever any admitted there, that would not sweat and labour here? Oh, labour against thy Corruptions, wrestle with Temptation, fight with thy spiritual Enemies, live in Contemplation of the highest Good, embrace thy Saviour with the warmest Love, strive to do much Good in thy Generation, and thy Rest will be sweet.

55. *And the Women also, which came with him from Galilee, followed after, and beheld the Sepulcher, and how his Body was laid.*

**T**RUE Goodness is never weary of following Christ: It follows him to the very Grave. It may meet with Stops and Rubs in its way, but it gets up again, and is not tired with running the Race which is set before it. O blessed Jesu! Thou hast not been weary of working and suffering for me! Let me never be weary of loving thee. When my Flesh would make me give over running after thee, assist me with new Strength and Courage, that I may hold out to the End. And, since none shall sit at thy Table in thy Kingdom, but those that have continued with thee in thy Temptations; Oh, let my Soul feel the Power of thy Spirit, which may lift me up, that I may mount up with Wings, as Eagles; may run, and not be weary; walk, and not faint, till I am within the Gates of Heaven.

L 1 z

56. *And*



§6. *And they returned and prepared Spices and Ointments, and rested the Sabbath-day, according to the Commandment.*

**M**Y dearest Lord! Though I have no opportunity to prepare Spices and Ointments for thy Burial, yet thou hast shewn me, how I may offer an Odor of a sweet Smell, a Sacrifice acceptable and well-pleasing to God. This is a Life fruitful in good Works! No Incense smells sweeter in thy Nostrils: No Perfume casts a nobler Scent in Heaven, than this. Enrich the Ground of my Heart, fatten it with thy Blood, water the Furrows thereof with thy Heavenly Dew, and shine upon it with thy gracious Beams, and bid the Tree of my Life advance, and Bud, and Blossom, and bear Fruit, even the Fruit of Charity, of Meekness, of Humility, of Patience, of Goodness, of Faith, of Love, of Temperance, of Sobriety, of Watchfulness, and of Contempt of the World, that I may have my Fruit unto Holiness, and the End everlasting Life.

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*The preceding Considerations reduced to Practice.*

**H**OW justly after this Prospect, may God say, *What could have been done more to my Vineyard, that I have not done in it?* St. Bernard hath an elegant Discourse upon this Subject, *Serm. de diligend. Deo.* to shew, what force the serious Consideration of Christ's Incarnation, and of what he hath done for us, and particularly of his Sufferings and Death, hath, to kindle the Fire of reciprocal Love in our Hearts. God, being desirous, saith he, to restore Man, who had lost himself, and to rescue him from the Clutches of the Devil, said within himself,

himself, if I should force this wretched Creature against his Will and Choice, to the Duties he is to discharge and perform, I should make a Beast or an Ass of him, instead of a rational Man; nor would he come to me voluntarily of his own accord, and with a good Will; nor would he be able to say, *I will freely Sacrifice unto thee*; therefore to make his coming to me a matter of choice and rational freedom, I will terrify and fright him, to see, whether that will drive him to Repentance, and accordingly he threatned him with Misery, which no Mortal is able to express, with everlasting Darkness, and a never dying Worm, and unquenchable Fire. But stubborn Man nothing terrified with all these Thunders, God was resolv'd to try what Promises would do, and since naturally he is desirous of Riches, and Honour, and Pleasures, and long Life; God accordingly promis'd him infinite Treasures of Glory, unexpressible Dignities in Heaven, and such Pleasures, as the Heart of Man is not able to conceive, they are so big and large and overflowing, and a Life free, not only from all Evil, but from any End or Period, and abounding with all manner of Felicities. But seeing that even this would not prevail, there is but one thing more, said he, that can be tried. And seeing there is in Man, not only a Fear and Desire, but a Principle of Love too, than which nothing is stronger to draw and incline his Will to Action: Accordingly he came himself and appear'd in Flesh, and carried himself so lovingly toward the Sinner, and proceeded to so great an excess of Charity, as to lay down his Life to save him. And therefore, he that after this, continues hard and impenitent, *saieth the Father*, will not turn to him, nor offer his Heart and Love to him, deserves most to justly hear this unwelcome Voice, *O Man, what could I have done more for thee, to gain*

thy Love and Affection, than I have done? Indeed, what can we desire he should do more for us? What can we desire more after his spilling his Blood, and enduring for us more, than any Man ever did? There is no greater Testimony of Love. If he had had a better thing than his Blood, he would have bestowed it upon us. But Love cannot go beyond this; and therefore when *Christ*, just at the Moment of his Death, cry'd, *It is finished*; We are not only to understand by that saying, that the Shadows of the Old Testament, the Desires of the Patriarchs, the Figures and Prophecies, which went before of him, were at an End, and accomplish'd, or that the Malice of the Jews, the Fury of the Devil, the Captivity of Sin, and the Reconciliation of the World were finished, and consummate; but the meaning withal is, that all the Art and Methods, and Stratagems of Love, had now received their Accomplishment, and that beyond this, there was nothing could be supposed capable to allure, or entice Men to express their Love and Affection to their God, and that beyond this, he knew of nothing else that could draw, or gain their Affection, than to be made Man, and to die for them. And if God be come to the utmost bounds of Condescension in this Attempt, and prevails not; judge, O Sinner, judge, whether thou art not most deservedly cast into eternal Darknes.

II. There is a great difference betwixt bare reading of *Christ's* Passion, and meditating of it. The former makes little or no Impression, the latter touches and affects. The former is no more than looking on the Wine, but the other is drinking of it. He that reads, may have his Thoughts all that while in the *Indies* upon his Business, or the Affairs of his Calling; and when he comes from reading, may be able to give but a  
very



very small account of his Pains, except it be some general Notions, and an imperfect draught, and that's no better, than taking up Water in a Sieve, which runs out as fast as it is put in. But Meditation fixes the Thoughts, and takes notice of the Weight and Importance of the History. This examines the End and Designs of the various Passages. This takes a View of every Circumstance, and finds, there are greater Mysteries in the particulars, than at first sight appear'd. This finds out new Mines, and makes that shining Gold, which was but Oar before. I have heard of some ill Men, that have been able to rehearse the whole New Testament Word for Word; but he that Meditates but upon one Verse of the Book, shall receive greater Advantages by it, than the other by Repetition of the whole Bible. But all Persons have not Heads, and Understandings fitted for Meditation; and therefore those that have not, must either make some short Remarks, or Reflections, upon what they Read, according to the Directions and Method before laid down, or make use of the Conceptions and Meditations of other Men, which may possibly affect them, as much as Thoughts of their own. However, by applying the Meditations they read, and reading them attentively, they make them their own; and though they sharpen their Shears and Coulters at other Mens Shops, yet that's no hindrance to their spiritual Profit and Edification; nay, some are of that Temper, that they like other Mens Contemplations better than their own, partly out of a natural mistrust of their own Abilities, partly out of respect to the Names and Persons of Learned and Pious Men. But whatever Meditations are made use of in this Case, seriousness must give them Life, and an intent to quicken our Souls and inward Man, must be the impulsive Cause; and from hence the Thoughtful *Christian*

may expect very blessed Effects and Consequences.  
Yet,

III. When I urge this Meditating on *Christ's* Death and Passion, by way of Preparation, and draw out this Meditation to so great prolixity, for fear of being misunderstood, I must add these following Rules and Cautions.

1. It is chiefly intended for such, as have time and leisure, from whom God justly expects more, than of those who are forced to employ their time early and late in hard Labour for a Livelihood; not but that the way to Bliss is one, and both Rich and Poor must observe the same substantial Duties, upon which the future Reward is promised, and both are obliged to be Just, and Sober, and Temperate, and Meek, and Humble, and Kind, and Tender-hearted, and Lovers of God, and Devout; but as the Rich have more time and leisure, so God expects they should exceed the other in Goodness, and employ that time, which the other are forced to bestow in the Sweat of their Face, upon Contemplations of nobler Objects, whereby they may become shining and burning Lights; and by their Example, supply the use of Books to the poorer sort, who, in their Actions, may compendiously view their own Duty, and be encouraged to follow their good Example with Humility, and Godly Fear.

2. This prolix Meditation may lawfully be forborn, upon urgent occasions, when a Person either is to receive the Holy Communion on his sick Bed, or is on a sudden called out to communicate with a Person, who is sick. In these Cases, shorter Reflections and Ejaculations, coming from a Heart set and fix'd upon the Love and Will of God, are acceptable; because, upon such occasions, *Christ's* Rule holds; *I will have Mercy more than Sacrifice.*

3. Nor

3. Nor is it necessary to tye our selves to the length of it. As to this, we may use Liberty; and Discretion must guide every Christian, who knows best, what he is able to bear, and what not. Sometimes only a few Verses of the afore-mention'd Chapters may be pitch'd upon for our Minds to expiate upon, sometimes a greater and larger Field may be set before us; and whereas, from the variety of managing our Directions, being sometimes short, sometimes prolix, this scruple is apt to arise, that this is a sign of weariness, and inconstancy, and unsteadiness in God's Service, that Scruple must be removed by consideration of *Christ's* and the Apostles Example, the former praying sometime all Night, and sometime using only some few Ejaculations to his heavenly Father; the other sometimes exercising themselves in Devotion till Midnight, at other times working Day and Night for the support of themselves, and Companions; which we must suppose was not consisting with great prolixity in set Meditations.



*The P R A Y E R.*

**O** My God, and Saviour! I am very sensible that I have great Obligations to love thee, upon the account of my Creation, Preservation, and daily Blessings, I receive from thy liberal Hand! But that which even forces me, works upon me powerfully, and, as it were, pushes me forward, and compels me to love thee, is the bitter Cup of thy Sufferings, which for my sake thou didst drink off, and the mighty work of Redemption, which renders thee altogether lovely to my Soul! That admirable and incomparable Testimony of thy Love, is a stronger attractive, makes a greater impulse, and is a sweeter, and a softer Cord to bind any Heart to thy Service. To effect this Work, thou hast taken more than ordinary Pains! When thou didst first create me, it cost thee no more than a Word speaking; but to reinstate me in that Bliss I had lost and forfeited, thou wast at the greatest expence and charge imaginable! Of the Sovereign Lord of the World, thou becamest a Servant; of Rich, extremely Poor; of the eternal Word, a Man; and of the Son of God, the Son of Man! So that tho' I was made of nothing, yet I was not redeem'd by nothing. Thou spentest but Six days to Create, and Frame the World; but Three and Thirty Years were spent to accomplish my Ransom, and Restitution to God's Favour; and O what Trouble, what

what Misery, was this thy Life filled withal! Thou didst humble thy self to Flesh, to Death, to the Death of the Cross, and, to effect this Glorious Work, wast content to be clad in Flesh, to be punish'd with Death, and to be disgraced by the Cross for this miserable Worm! Thou didst do much, and suffer much, that I might love thee much; and because the Facility of my Creation did not move me much, thou therefore wast content to be at an excessive trouble in my Redemption, thereby to charm my Soul the more, and to plant in me greater Resentments of thy Charity! To this end thy Side was open'd with a Lance, that all Men might look into thy Wounds, and into thy very Heart, and see how it bled for Love! To this end thy Sacred Head did bend to the East, thy Feet were extended to the West, and thine Arms spread to the North and South, to let People in all parts of the World see, how much thou lovest him, and thereby to draw their Hearts, and unite them to thy self for ever! O let not mine be cold under this wonderful Sight; and while I see my God buffeted, my God crown'd with Thorns, my God struck on the Face, and my God giving up the Ghost, let all that is within me be touch'd, and quickened, and enliven'd, and encourag'd to cleave and to cling to thee for ever. *Amen,*

*Amen,*

CHAP.



## CH A P. XXIII.

### Of Self-Examination, the Second Act of Preparation for his Holy Sacrament.

#### The CONTENTS.

*A wonderful thing, that this Sacrament works no greater Effects! One great Reason of it, want of Self-examination. The Necessity of Self-examination proved by Three Reasons, how it must be managed. The Rule of it, the Word of God. A Catalogue of Sins and Duties. These to be considered, with Respect to our Temper and Inclination. The great Objection of the Intricacy, Difficulty, and Tediouſness of this Task, answered; and a Way laid down, whereby it may be made facile, and easy, and delightful. Some Rules to be observed in the Practice of this Self-examination, that it may become effectual. The Error of some Churches in the Primitive Times, who gave this Sacrament to Children and Infants. As ſoon as Persons are able to examine themselves, they are bound to come to this Sacrament: Another Man's examining of us is not enough, without Self-Examination. The Prayer.*

- I.  NE of the most wonderful things in the Christian World, is, that such a Sacrament, as that of the Eucharist, should be instituted by the great Saviour of Mankind: A Sacrament, wherein the most stupendious Blessings are offered to Men; and that Men



Men should receive it so often, and no greater Effects should appear upon their Lives and Tempers, after their Participation of it : Which is as much as to say, that Fire gives no Heat, and the Sun no Light, Health affords no Cure, Abundance keeps Men Poor, and the most wholesome Meat produces no Nourishment. That which makes the thing the more strange, and astonishing, is this, That God makes nothing, no, not the least Drop of Rain, nor the least Grain of Sand, but for some excellent End ; and therefore must be supposed to have ordained this Sacrament for the most noble Ends imaginable. And if the Effects he designs by this Ordinance, be such as our *Liturgy* tells us, *For then we spiritually eat the Flesh of Christ, and drink his Blood ; then we dwell in Christ, and Christ in us ; we are one with Christ, and Christ with us :* If these be the designed and intended Effects of this Ordinance, as certainly they are, it must be Matter of Astonishment to see so little of these Effects produced in the many Communicants that appear at this Holy Table. And what can we ascribe these Effects to, but to Mens Indisposition ? In Natural Things, Philosophers tells us, the Causes of Things, how excellent soever, are determined in their Effects, by the Disposition of their Subjects ; For which Reason we see, that the Sun melts Wax, and hardens Clay ; makes some things pure and white, and others black ; and the same Meat, being eaten by different Persons, cause Health in one, and Sicknesses in other. And, no doubt, the same Rule will hold in Grace too ; and therefore, that this Sacrament works not those admirable Effects, intended by Christ, in abundance of Persons, must be for want of a suitable Preparation. Vessels hold more or less Water, according to their Capacity ; if the Vessel be little, it will hold but little : And according to the Disposition of our Souls, so we receive

ceive much, or less, or nothing at all, in this Sacrament. And one of these excellent previous Dispositions, is, Self-Examination, expressly enjoyn'd by the Apostle, 1 Cor. II. 28. *But let a Man examine himself, and so let him eat of that Bread, and drink of that Cup.*

II. Though it be in a manner needless, after I have laid down the Apostle's Command, to prove the Necessity of this Self-Examination; yet, for a fuller Satisfaction of the Reader, I shall enquire into the Reasons of the Necessity; which are these following:

I. *All great Actions require Deliberation.* This is a Maxim all Mankind agree in. 'Tis a common Principle: And we count that Man a Fool, that attempts an Action of great Concernment, without it: And Christ himself hath taught us to do so, *Luke 14. 28, 29. For, which of you, saith he, intend to build a Tower, sits not down first, and counts the Cost, whether he have sufficient to finish it; lest happily, after he hath laid the Foundation, and is not able to finish it, all that behold it begin to mock him, saying, This Man began to build, and was not able to finish.* And if Deliberation be necessary before any great Enterprize, Self-Examination must needs be so before Receiving of the Holy Eucharist: For, Who knows not, that Receiving the Holy Communion is one of the most solemn, most weighty, and important Parts of our Religion? And if Deliberation be necessary, as a Preparative, Self-Examination must be so too; because Deliberation cannot be duly perform'd without it: For, he that Deliberates before he comes to this Sacrament, must necessarily consider the Majesty, Grandeur, and Infinite Power, Splendor, and Excellency of the Master of the Feast; the Kindness, Mercy, Compassion, and Excesses of Charity he expresses in it to miserable Creatures; and  
whether

whether himself hath those Qualifications, Desires, Inclinations, and Resolutions, which that magnificent Master of the Feast requires of the invited Guests; and whether those Virtues, those Ornaments, those Ingredients of true Repentance, that Hatred of Sin, that Love to Goodness, which God expects of the Persons that render themselves at this Table, be in him. And what is this, but *Self-Examination*.

2. Want of Self-Examination is the Mother of Ignorance. He that doth not examine himself before he receives the Holy Communion (having never done it before) must necessarily continue a Stranger to himself. 'Tis true, for ought he knows, he may receive as worthily as the best: But, for ought he knows too, he may eat and drink Judgment and Damnation to himself. Want of Examination leaves the Soul blind, makes her Understanding useless, and charges God with having given the Man a Reflexive Power in vain. Examination must acquaint him with himself; and discover to him, whether he hath the Marks of a Penitent, the Character of a Soul laden with a sense of Sin, and whether he be a fit Subject to receive Reconciliation; whether his Errors be strong, or do abate; whether he feels the Operation of God's Spirit upon his own; whether the Things unseen make any Impression upon his Soul, and whether he hath that Faith and Love, which, in the sight of God, is of great Price. To be Ignorant of all this, what is it, but to grope in the Dark, and, instead of coming like a Rational Creature to this Ordinance, to approach with the Inclination of a Brute? And though it is granted, that he who neglects this Self-Examination, may understand the Design of this Sacrament, and the Mercies tender'd to the Soul in general; yet still, without this Search, he cannot tell whether those Mercies belong to him, whether he hath a  
Share



Share in them, or whether he may rationally expect them at Christ's Hand. It is observed therefore, that when Christ spoke of the Disciple that should betray him, he doth not mention his Name; thereby to give the Disciples occasion to enquire whether they found any Inclinations in themselves to so great a piece of Ingratitude. So that want of Self-Examination, as it propagates Ignorance in the Soul, so it is to act directly against the Design of the Gospel; which is to *fill us with Spiritual Knowledge and Understanding*, Col. 1. 9. *And to make us know the things which are freely given us of God*, 1 Cor. 2. 12.

3. All the Blessings of the Gospel are promised conditionally; and consequently, the Blessings which are the genuine Concomitants of this Holy Sacrament. And how shall any Man take Comfort in these Blessings, if he enquire not whether the Conditions, upon which these Blessings are promised, be fulfilled in him; or whether it be the Desire and Endeavor of his Soul, to fulfil them? If a Prince should set out a Proclamation, that on such a Day he intends to bestow some Jewels of great Value, on all Persons that have found any Secret of Nature, which may be of publick Use: How ridiculous would that Man make himself, that should appear among the Candidates, without enquiring whether he was ever Master of an Invention, whereby the Publick might be advanced. Those that enquire, and find upon Enquiry, that what they have done, is agreeable to the Condition the Prince requires, may approach chearfully, and have their Expectation gratified. So it is here; The Blessings promised in this Sacrament, are, as I have often hinted in the preceding Discourse, *Remission of Sins*; But that is promised upon the Condition of *turning from Darkness to Light*, Acts 26. 18. *Peace with God*: And that is promised upon the

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Condition of a lively Faith, which is Active; as that of Abraham's was Rom. 5. 11. A Right Title to the Everlasting Inheritance: And that is promised upon Condition of Fighting the good Fight, 2 Tim. 4. 7. Comfort in Tribulation: And what is promised upon Condition of Trasting and Relying upon God, 2 Cor. 1. 9. The Assistance of God's Spirit: And that promised upon Condition of Walking as the Children of God, and willingness to be led and guided by him, Rom. 8. 14. Union and Communion with Christ: And that is promised upon Condition of Walking in the Light of good Works, John 1. 7. Increase of Grace: And that is promised upon Condition of a humble Temper, Jam. 4. 6. Strength against our Corruptions: And that is promised upon Condition of putting on the whole Armour of God, Ephes. 6. 10, 11. Assurance of God's Love: And that is promised upon Condition of our sincere Love to Christ Jesus, John 14. 21. That all these Blessings are promised to us in this Sacrament, is evident from hence, because Christ himself is promised to be given into our Bosoms, and we cannot receive Christ without his Benefits; and these Benefits are those I have mention'd. But, since these Blessings are not to be had without an hearty Consent and Agreement to those Conditions; and it is impossible to take Comfort in these Blessings, except we know we have a Right to them; and it is as impossible to know whether we have or not, without Self-Examination; it must necessarily follow, that Self-Examination is a necessary Duty and Preparative for this Holy Sacrament.

III. How this Self-Examination is to be managed, is the next thing we must discourse of, and that which we are to consider here, is, partly the Rule whereby this Examination must be made, partly the Things that are to be examin'd, and partly our

*Temper and Disposition* with respect to things, about which Enquiry is made.

1. The Rule; and that, without doubt, must be the *Law of God*, as it is either contracted and reduc'd to a few principal Heads in the *Decalogue*, or the *Ten Commandments*; or, as it is explain'd and spread into various Branches in the Body of the Gospel; and particularly, in Christ's Sermon upon the Mount: And this Law, as it is set forth and explained in the Gospel, is that which we Christians are to stand and fall by. This Law, as it is most suitable and agreeable to Reason, and intended to perfect Human Nature; so it is the standing Rule of our Thoughts, Desires, Words and Actions, and of our Behaviour and Deportment in our several Capacities, and is called the *Law of Faith*, Rom. 3. 27. i. e. a Summary of those Duties which a sound and serious Belief of another Life, and of the Promises and Threatnings of the Gospel, enforces and binds upon the Soul. This Law, as it is given for the nonce, so Christ expects his Followers should observe the Particulars of it; and protests, that he will take none for his Friends, but such as *do whatsoever he commands them*, John 15. 14. and compares all those to very foolish Men, and pursuing their own Ruin, that *hear these Sayings of his, and do them not*, Mat. 7. 26. And protests, that he will look upon none as *Sheep of his Flock*, but those that *hear and obey his Voice*, John 10. 26, 27. And for the Performance of this Law, he is ready to assist us with his Spirit, if we earnestly seek it: And that we may not pretend Impossibilities of keeping it, he allows of a sincere Repentance, if thro' Inadvertency, at any Time we run counter to any Particular of that Law; and promises to accept of that Repentance, if it be not a Matter of Form, but a serious Purpose to observe them better for the future. And therefore,

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2. The things that are to be insisted on in this Self-Examination, are, partly the *Sins* and *Breaches* of this Law we have been guilty of, and partly our *Duties*; both which, because they lie dispers'd, as I said, thro' the whole Body of the Gospel, it will not be amiss, for the Reader's Ease, to reduce to a certain Catalogue; that, looking over the Catalogue, he may see, which of these Sins he is, and hath been prone to, and in what Duties he hath been defective.

## A Catalogue of SINS forbid in the Gospel.

1. **T**O deny the Being of God, Rom. 3. 11.

2. To believe or worship more Gods than one,  
1 Cor. 8. 6.

3. Not to believe God's Omniscience and Omnipresence,  
Acts 17. 2.

4. Not to believe the Truth of the Gospel; and particularly, that Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified by the Jews, is the Son of the Living God, and the Saviour of the World, Mark 16. 16. John 3. 36.

5. To give Religious Worship, or Worship of Devotion, to any Creature, Mat. 4. 10.

6. To tempt God, or to desire he should work a Miracle for us, either to gratify our Lust or Curiosity, when he hath given sufficient Means to compass our lawful Desires, Matt. 4. 7.

7. To mistrust his Providence, Matt. 6. 25.

8. Not to worship God by Prayer and Praises, 1 Tim. 2. 1.

9. To Blaspheme and speak Evil of God, 1 Tim. 1. 20.

10. To repine and murmur at any Affliction God sends upon us, Heb. 12. 5.

11. To speak reproachfully or jestingly of his Service, or Word, or Ordinances; or to make Sport with any part of Scripture, or with Holy Things, Acts 17. 18.

12. Sacrilege, i. e. either to take away what is consecrated to God's Service, or to convert it to a profane Use, Rom. 1. 22.

13. To fancy God to be a Man, or of Human Shape, John 4. 24.

14. To swear by God's Name, or to use any other Oath, in common Discourse, or familiar Communication, Matt. 5. 34, 35.

15. Perjury, and Forswearing ourselves, either in private, or in a Court of Judicature, Matt. 5. 33.

16. Filthy, wicked, frothy, and lascivious and injurious Speeches and Discourses, Ephes. 4. 29.

17. To prefer our own Ease, Profit, Honour, Pleasure, and the Favour of Men, before God's Favour, and his Will, when a known Duty is to be perform'd, Luke 10. 41.

18. To love the outward Comforts of the World better than God, Matt. 10. 37.

19. To profane the Lord's Day, either by playing, or tipling, or idleness, or lying a bed, or neglect of publick and private Devotion, Acts 20. 27.

20. Not to be attentive to the Word of God when it is preach'd, and to be careless of doing the Will of God, which is delivered to us, Matt. 13. 19.

21. To stare about in the Church, when we are engaged in Prayer and Devotion, 1 Cor. 11. 10.

22. To use any immodest Gesture, Posture, or Behaviour, in the House of God, 1 Cor. 11. 22.

23. To revile or speak evil of the King, and the Rulers of the People; to resist them, or to plot against their Life and Welfare, Rom. 13. 1, 5.

24. To neglect and disobey the Lawful Commandments of our Superiors, when they require our Compliance, 1 Pet. 2. 35.
25. To abuse, affront, or laugh at the Ministers of God's Word, or at their Doctrine, if true and agreeable to the Word of God, 1 Tim. 4. 11, 12.
26. To curse Father and Mother, and to be unkind and disrespectful to them, 1 Tim. 1. 9. 2 Tim. 3. 2.
27. To laugh at any Person, or to abuse them for their natural Infirmities, and which they cannot help; such as Blindness, Lameness, Distraction, &c. 1 Pet. 3. 8.
28. To murder ourselves or others, whatever the Provocation or Temptation be, Jam. 2. 11.
29. To hurt, or maim, or wound our Neighbor, Matt. 5. 38, 39.
30. To revenge an Injury or Affront offer'd to us, Rom. 12. 19.
31. To challenge our Neighbors to fight with us, and to answer that Challenge, Rom. 12. 21.
32. To envy our Neighbor's Parts, Gifts, Abilities, or Happiness and Welfare, Jam. 3. 16.
33. To speak Evil of Men, out of Hatred, Malice, or Ill-Will, Tit. 3. 2.
34. To harbour secret Grudges in our Hearts to our Neighbors, Jam. 5. 9.
35. To be implacable, unmerciful, and unwilling to forgive Injuries from our Hearts, Jam. 2. 13. Matt. 18. 32, 33.
36. To fly out into a Passion upon any slight Offence or Distaste given us, and to call Men Fools and Rogues, and other ill Names, Matt. 5. 22.
37. To be peevish, pettish, impatient, touchy, apt to take Exceptions at trifling Things and Actions, and little disrespects shewn us, 1 Cor. 13. 4, 7.
38. To cheat, wrong, defraud, or undermine our Neighbors in any thing, or to steal things from them against their Will, either secretly or openly, 1 Thes. 4. 6.



39. To judge and Censure our Neighbors rashly, meerly to divert ourselves, or to make the Company merry, without sufficient Ground or Reason, Matt. 7. 1, 2, 3.

40. To commit Adultery, or Fornication, or any Act of Uncleanneſs and Lasciviousneſs, either upon ourſelves, or others, 1 Cor. 6. 9, 10.

41. To cherish Luſtful Thoughts, Deſires, Paſſions, Looks, Geſtures, Poſtures, and Glances, Matt. 5. 27, 28.

42. To give ourſelves to laſcivious Feſts, Songs, Ballads, and Anſwers, which may make the Company ſmile, Ephes. 5. 3, 4.

43. To go into a Woman, tho' a lawful Wiſe, in the time of her Separation, Gall. 5. 19.

44. All unnatural Luſts and Affections, and ſuch Things againſt which the Apoſtle ſpeaks, Rom. 1. 26, 27.

45. To frequent Stage-plays, and ſuch Theatrical Shows, where Sin and Vanity are encouraged, Rom. 12. 2.

46. To delight in filthy Sight, and looking upon Objects which raiſe evil Thoughts in us, Matt. 5. 29.

47. To try Experiments in Luſt, and to act our Lewdneſs over in our Minds again, Ephes. 4. 19.

48. To go into Company, where we are ſure to be tempted and perſuaded to that which is evil, Matt. 5. 30.

49. Drunkenneſs, or drinking and tipling to the Diſorder of our Reaſon, 1 Cor. 6. 9, 10. Eph. 5. 16, 18.

50. To flatter our Neighbors, and to have their Perſons in Admiration, becauſe of Advantage, Jude 1. 16.

51. To lye unto our Neighbors, and to ſpeak that to them which we know is not true, Eph. 4. 25.

52. To diſſemble with God, and with our Neighbors, and give them fair Words, while we hate them in our Hearts, Rom. 12. 9.

53. To bid our Servants, or Friends, or others, to tell Lyes for us, Heb. 3. 13.

54. To follow a Multitude to do evil, and to do ill things, becauſe they are done commonly, Eph. 5. 11.

55. To

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55. To be greedy and covetous after the things of this World, to the neglect of our Souls, and Spiritual Welfare, Eph. 5. 3.

56. To delay our Repentance, and to drive off our Seriousness from time to time, Heb. 3. 15.

57. To do wrong to our Neighbors; and particularly to a poor Man, or Stranger, or to an Enemy, Ephes. 4. 32.

58. To glory in bad Actions, Phil. 3. 19.

59. To aim at the Praise and Applause of Men in good Actions, Matt. 6. 1, 2.

60. To mis-spend our Time by Idleness, and Laziness, and Gaming, and immoderate Recreations, Ephes. 5. 15, 16.

61. Gluttony and Intemperance in eating, or eating more than Nature requires, 2 Pet. 1. 6.

62. To delight in gaudy Cloathing, and fondness of imitating of every Fashion, 1 Pet. 3. 3, 4.

63. To render Evil for Evil, and Reviling for Reviling, 1 Pet. 2. 23.

64. To be ashamed of the Gospel, and of Religion, or of Religious Duties, or of doing the will of God, Mark. 8. 38.

65. To be weary of Well-doing, or of any commanded Religious Duty; and to give over our Seriousness, Gal. 6. 9.

66. To be uncharitable, and to harden our Hearts and Bowels against the Distressed and Needy, 1 John 3. 17.

67. To scandalize others, or to give Offence by Actions, either heedless or sinful, Mat. 18. 6, 7.

68. To follow an unlawful Profession, that necessitates us unto Sin, Mat. 18. 8.

69. To entice, and encourage, and draw others into Sin, by our ill Examples, or Sollicitation, Rom. 2. 22.

70. To comply with other Men in their Sins, because they urge or press us to it, 2 Cor. 6. 17, 18.

71. To be proud, haughty, self-conceited; and to entertain an high Opinion of ourselves, Parts, Abilities, and Accomplishments; and to despise others, Luke 14. 10, 11.

72. To neglect the Service of God for every trifle, and every little business that would draw us from it, Luke 2. 49. and 10. 41, 42.

73. To use needless Asseverations in common Discourses and in trivial Matters; such as, I vow, I protest, I swear, &c. Matt. 5. 37.

74. To reveal our Neighbor's Secrets, which they in love communicate to us, Phil. 2. 4. Matt. 7. 12.

75. To rejoyce in our Neighbor's Fall, or Misfortune, or Misery, Rom. 12. 15.

76. To be careless, negligent, slovenly, or superficial in any Part of God's Service, Rom. 12. 11.

77. To presume upon God's goodness, or to sin, and go on in sin, because God is merciful and patient, Rom. 2. 4, 5.

78. To despair of God's Mercy; or to think that he either cannot, or will not pardon upon our sincere Repentance, Matt. 12. 31.

79. To fancy that a customary Faith, without suitable Works, will save us, Jam. 2. 26.

80. To be morose, surly, ill-natur'd, and give rough and imperious Language to our Neighbors, 1 Pet. 3. 8.

81. To let our Neighbors and Friends go on in their Sin, without reprovng them, Ephes. 5. 11.

82. To set our Hearts and Affections upon the Riches and Comforts of this Life, Mark 10. 24. Col. 3. 1, 2.

83. To mourn and take on, under any Cross and Loss, like Men without Hope, 1 Thes. 4. 13. 2 Cor. 7. 10.

84. To be careless and neglectful of a faithful Discharge of the Duties of our several Callings and Relations: As,

1. For Husbands to be churlish, bitter, and unkind to their Wives, Col. 3. 19.

2. For Wives to be froward, talkative, brawling, and injurious to their Husbands Goods and Name, 1 Pet. 3. 1, 4.

3. For Magistrates to suffer Injustice, Oppression, Murder, Irreligioness, Atheism, and Profaneness, to go unpunished, Rom. 13. 3.

4. For



4. For Subjects to raise ill Reports of their Magistrates, and mis-construct their Actions, to the Disturbance of the Government, 1 Pet. 2. 13, 14.

5. For Parents to shew their Children bad Examples, to indulge them in their Sins, or to suffer them to do what they list, without Correction, Ephes. 6. 4.

6. For Children to be disobedient to their Parents lawful Commands; or to deny them Maintenance when they are in want, and the Children able to relieve and assist them, Ephes. 6. 1, 2.

7. For Masters to keep back the Hire or Wages of their Servants, and to suffer them to neglect God's Service, and the Concerns of their own Souls, Col. 4. 1.

8. For Servants to grumble or murmur at their Masters lawful Commands; or chiding of them, to answer again; to be unfaithful, to disparage their Masters and Mistresses, and to discover to others what their Superiors would have kept secret, Tit. 2. 9, 10.

85. To neglect or defer our Baptism, in case we were never baptized before; and to forbear bringing our Children to be baptiz'd, Matt. 28. 9.

86. Not to come to the Lord's Supper, after we come to Years of Understanding and Discretion, Matt. 26. 26, 27.

87. To eat and drink unworthily at the Lord's Table, 1 Cor. 11. 29.

88. To neglect thinking of good things, Phil. 4. 8.

89. Idolatry, Witchcraft, Seditions, Schisms, Heresies, Gal. 5. 20.

90. Whispering to our Neighbor's Prejudice, Back-biting, Despightfulness, Boasting, Inventing of evil Things, Covenant-breaking, and being without natural Affections, and delighting in other Men's Sins, Rom. 1. 29. 30, 31, 32.

91. To do Evil, that Good may come of it, Rom 3. 8.

If any Sins are left out in this Catalogue, they are such as may be referred to those which are mention'd. And tho' some that are mention'd

as

as distinct Sins, may very well go for one; yet the Reason why a distinct Number is allow'd them, is merely because vulgar Capacities might thereby get a clearer Knowledge and Apprehension of them.

## A Catalogue of DUTIES commanded in the Gospel.

1. **T**O believe that God is One in Three, and Three in One, and that the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, are that one God, 1 John 5.

7. John 10. 30.

2. To believe that the Son of God was incarnate and came into this World, by his Holy Life and Death, to save Men from their Sins, John 3. 16, 17, 18.

3. To believe that Jesus of Nazareth, who appear'd in the Days of Pontius Pilate, and was crucified, is that Son of God, and our Redeemer and Mediator, and is both God and Man in one Person, Acts 10. 38. Rom. 1. 3, 4.

4. To believe, that without Faith, Repentance, and an Holy Obedience to the Commands of the Gospel, we have no Interest in Christ's Death, and the Benefits of it, Heb. 5. 9.

5. To believe that there is an Heaven and Hell, and eternal Rewards and Punishments after this Life, according to the good or evil Lives of Men, 2 Thess. 1. 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10.

6. To believe that the Dead Bodies of Men shall rise again in the Great Day of Judgment, 2 Tim. 2. 17, 18.

7. To believe that the assistance of God's Holy Spirit, in order to a sound Faith, and true Repentance, is a Gift which may be had by earnest Prayer, Luke 11. 13.

8. To

8. To love God with all our Hearts, and with all our Souls, and with all our Minds, i. e. with great Sincerity, Mat. 22. 37.

9. To rely upon God, and trust in him in all dangers and necessities whatsoever, and firmly to believe, that all things will work for our good, if we love him, Rom. 8. 28. Heb. 13. 5, 6.

10. To believe, that the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament are the revealed Word of God, and to read, and search, and meditate in these holy Scriptures, in order to know what we must do to be saved, John 5. 39.

11. To prefer the Will of God before the Will and Favour of Men, when these two come to clash or interfere one with another, Acts 5. 28.

12. To live and walk in a lively sense of God's Omniscience and Omnipresence, Acts 23. Luke 1. 75.

13. To have great, high, and reverend Thoughts of God, and Conceptions suitable to his infinite Wisdom and Goodness, and Power, 1 Pet. 3. 15.

14. To let our Speech be always with Grace, season'd with Salt, that we may know how to answer every man, Col. 4. 6.

15. To be frequent, and serious, and attentive in praising of God, and praying to him for his Help, Assistance, and Protection, especially Night and Morning, Luke 2. 37. Eph. 6. 18.

16. To walk worthy of our Baptism, even in newness of Life, Rom. 6. 3, 4.

17. To make great Conscience of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, to come often to that Holy Table, and to prepare and examine our selves, in order to our worthy receiving of Pardon and Remission of Sins, 1 Cor. 11. 26, 28.

18. To express willingness and alacrity in God's Service, and to be ready unto good Works, Tit. 3. 1.

19. To have pure aims and designs in Holy Duties, and good Works, viz. The glory of God, and the good of others, Mat. 6. 22. 1 Pet. 4. 11.

20. To



20. To be zealous and fervent in Devotion, and in expressing our Love to God, Tit. 2. 14.

21. To bring a very serious mind with us to the House of God, and to behave ourselves there with all decency, and gravity, 1 Cor. 11. 22.

22. To be not only a hearer of the Word, but a doer of it also, Jam. 1. 22.

23. To fix our thoughts upon God in the public Prayers of the Church, and to offer to God the desires of our Hearts, in joining with the Congregation in their Prayers, Rom. 15. 6.

24. To sanctify the Lord's Day, both in private and in publick, Acts 20. 7. Rev. 1. 10.

25. To be subject to Principalities and Powers, and to obey Magistrates, Tit. 3. 1.

26. To obey our Pastors and Teachers that have the rule over us, and to submit ourselves to them, as those that watch for our Souls, Heb. 13. 17.

27. To maintain our Ministers, and to communicate to them in all good things, Gal. 6. 6.

28. Faithfully to discharge the Duties of our respective Relations; As

1. Husbands to love and Honour their Wives, Ephes. 5. 15.

2. Wives to be obedient and subject to their Husbands, Ephes. 5. 22.

3. Parents to provide for the Souls and Bodies of their Children, 1 Tim. 5. 8.

4. Children to honour their Parents all their Days, Ephes. 6. 1.

5. Masters to encourage their Servants to Goodness, and to be just in paying them their Wages, Ephes. 6. 9.

6. Servants to serve their Masters in singleness of Heart, fearing God, and to please them well in all things, Col. 3. 22.

7. Ministers to be Patterns of good Works, Tit. 2. 7.

8. Widows to trust in God, and to continue in Supplications Night and Day, 1 Tim. 5. 5.

9. Virgins

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9. Virgins to mind those things that may please the Lord Jesus, 1 Cor. 7. 32.

29. To learn to be very meek and humble upon all occasions, Matt. 11. 29.

30. To hunger and thirst after Goodness and Righteousness, Matt. 5. 9.

31. To purifie the Heart, or inward Man, from evil Desires and Affections, and to season it with holy Thoughts and Contemplations, Matt. 5. 8.

32. To labour to make Peace among dissenting Neighbors, and to be peaceable ourselves, and as much as in us lies, with all Men, Matt. 5. 9. Rom. 12. 18.

33. To rejoyce in being reviled and persecuted for Righteousness sake, Matt. 5. 11, 12.

34. To be merciful, kind, tender-hearted, and charitable, and ready to forgive, Ephes. 4. 32.

35. To edify others by our Conversation, and to preserve them, as much as in us lies, from Sin and Damnation, Matt. 5. 13, 14.

36. To love our Enemies, to bless them that curse us, to do good to them that hate us, and to pray for them which despitefully use us, Matt. 5. 44.

37. Rather to lose our Right, than quarrel and go to Law about small things, Matth. 5. 39, 40.

38. To use great Simplicity in our Speeches and Answers, Matt. 5. 37.

39. To give and to lend to our poor Neighbor what is reasonable, Matt. 5. 49.

40. To humble ourselves sometimes before God by fasting, Matt. 6. 16.

41. To be confident God will provide for us in the use of honest and lawful means, Matt. 6. 31.

42. To seek God's Kingdom, and its Righteousness, with more earnest Affections than temporal things, Matt. 6. 20, 33.

43. To reform ourselves, before we seek to reform others, Matt. 7. 5.

44. To do to others what we would have others do to us, Matt. 7. 12.

45. To

45. To enter in at the strait Gate, and to deny our selves in our Honour, Ease, and Pleasure, for a better Life, Matth. 7. 13.

46. To confess and own Christ, and his Religion, before Men, Matth. 10. 32.

47. To be industrious in the discharge of the Duties of our Calling, Rom. 12. 6, 7, 8.

48. To live without Dissimulation, Rom. 12. 9.

49. To be patient in Tribulation, Rom. 12. 12.

50. To rejoyce with them that do rejoyce, and to weep with them that weep, Rom. 12. 15.

51. To condescend to Men of Low Estates, Rom. 12. 16.

52. To provide things honest in the sight of all Men, Rom. 12. 17.

53. To overcome the Evil with Good, Rom. 12. 21.

54. To bear with the Infirmities of the Weak, Rom. 15. 1.

55. To avoid familiarity with Sectaries, and such as disturb the Peace of the Church, Rom. 16. 17, 18.

56. To practice the Rules of that Charity which are set down, 1 Cor. 13. 4, 5, 6, 7.

57. To bring forth those Fruits of the Spirit which we find specified, Gal. 5. 22, 23.

58. To learn to be wise unto Salvation, 1 Cor. 3. 18.

59. If a Man be overtaken in a Fault, to restore him in the Spirit of Meekness, Gal. 6. 1.

60. To redeem the time we have lost, by our greater diligence in God's Service, Ephes. 5. 6.

61. To resist Temptations to Sin with all our might, Ephes. 6. 13, 14, 15.

62. To study Modesty and Decency in all our Actions, 1 Thess. 4. 3, 4, 5.

63. To esteem the faithful Teachers, of the Word very highly for their Works sake, 1 Thess. 5. 12, 13.

64. To comfort the feeble-minded, to support the weak, to be patient towards all Men, 1 Thess. 5. 14.

65. To rejoyce in the Lord always, Phil. 4. 4.

66. To use and shew Moderation to all Men, Phil. 4. 5.

67. To



67. To give Thanks in every thing, and to give God the Glory, whether we eat and drink, or whatever we do, 1 Cor. 10. 13. 1 Theff. 5. 18.
68. To abstain from Appearances of Evil, 1 Theff. 5. 22.
69. To prove and try things by the Word of God, and to hold fast that which is good, 1 Theff. 5. 21.
70. To be content with Food and Rayment, if God doth not think fit to give us more, 1 Tim. 6. 6, 7, 8.
71. To be steady and constant in our Duties, without fainting, Rev. 2. 20.
72. To study great Sincerity and Simplicity in our Actions, 2 Cor. 1. 12.
73. To be rich in good Works, where God hath blessed us with Riches in this World, 1 Tim. 6. 17, 18.
74. To use great Temperance in Eating and Drinking, 1 Cor. 9. 25.
75. To use great Modesty in our Apparel, 1 Tim. 2. 9.
76. To visit the Fatherless and Widows in their Afflictions, Jam. 1. 27.
77. To bridle our Tongues, Jam. 1. 26.
78. To be easy entreated to that which is good, Jam. 3. 17.
79. To say of things we intend to do, If the Lord will, and we shall live, Jam. 4. 15.
80. To call for the Elders or Ministers of the Church when we are sick, and to let them pray over us, Jam. 5. 14.
81. If we are cheerful, to sing Psalms, Jam. 5. 13.
82. If we have done any thing prejudicial to our Neighbours, to confess our Faults to them, Jam. 5. 16.
83. To endeavour to convert others to the Love of God, Luke 22. 32.
84. To have our Conversation in Heaven, and to look more at the things which are not seen, than at those which are seen, Phil. 3. 20. 2 Cor. 4. 18.
85. To be sober and vigilant over our Actions, 1 Pet. 5. 8.
86. To grow in Grace, and in the Knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ, 2 Pet. 3. 18.

87. To use Hospitality, and to be kind and obliging to Strangers, Heb. 13. 2.
88. To lay down even our Lives for our Brethren, if it be for the good of the Church, 1 John 3. 16.
89. To use the World, as if we used it not, 1 Cor. 7. 31.
90. To give diligence to make our Calling and Election sure, 2 Pet. 7. 10.
91. To imitate the good Examples we see before us, Heb. 13. 7. Phil. 3. 17.
92. To be courteous and affable in our Discourses and Behavior, 1 Pet. 3. 8.
93. To repent of the Sins we have fallen into, and to forsake them, 2 Cor. 12. 21.

These are the Duties we find commanded in the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by looking over these Two Catalogues, we may soon perceive, what we have been doing against God, our Neighbor, and ourselves, and wherein we have been defective. But then,

3. This Self-Examination will not be compleat, except we consider these Sins and Duties, with respect to our present Temper, and Inclination. And therefore,

1. As to the Sins, which upon a survey of the Catalogue, we find ourselves guilty of, or prone to, our Hearts must be ask'd whether we have an aversion from them, whether we are resolved to shew our dislike and hatred to them for the future, whether we do think it worth our pains to exercise ourselves in the mortification of them, whether our real purpose is, whenever we are tempted to any of them, to oppose the Temptation, and to keep ourselves unsported from the Infection; whether the bent of our Soul is, wittingly and wilfully to allow ourselves in the Commission of them no more, whether we do in good earnest intend to enquire and take advice, and to use the proper Remedies to be rid of them,

them, whether we are resolv'd to shun the apparent Occasions of them, and whether, in case we do through incogitancy run into any of these Errors, to get up again presently, and endeavor to bring our selves to an habit of cautiousness of offending God, and whether we will pray much, and work hard, to shake these Vipers from our Bosoms.

2. As to the *Duties* which, upon a view of the aforesaid List, we find we have neglected, enquiry must be made, whether we see and taste the sweetness of them, whether we do heartily believe, that the perfection of our Nature consists in them, whether we do earnestly resolve, whatever comes of it, to be Possessors of them, whether they ingross the desires of our Hearts, whether we have any ardent Longings after these spiritual Accomplishments, whether we prefer an holy fruitfulness in these Virtues before Temporal Felicities, whether we have a sense of the great Necessity, Beauty, and Excellency of them, whether we do not content our selves with bare Wishes after them, but are fully purposed to take the way, whereby we may obtain them; whether we are resolv'd to improve the single and accidental Acts, into a lasting Habit and Disposition, and whether we will be earnest with God for the assistance of his Holy Spirit, that they may take Root in us, and solicit the Grace of God to prosper our Endeavours; whether we think them worth having, and will act like Persons, that do think so; whether if we have done them imperfectly, the purpose of our Souls is to perform them with greater sincerity; whether, if foil'd at any time in the pursuit of them, we mean to take fresh Courage, and to fall on again, till we arrive to a facility in the Practice; and if gentler Means will not prevail, whether we will use the severer, and more rigorous ways of Mortification, and offer even Violence to our Desires,



rather than go without them. If our Hearts can and dare answer in the Affirmative, and say, *Yea*, to these Queries, we are safe, and may believe, God hath mighty Blessings in store for us, and will bestow them upon us in the use of this Holy Sacrament. In such a Method this Self-examination must proceed, and then its like to produce the Effects we desire, and God expects at our Hands.

IV. But still you will say, *That is a very operose and laborious Business, and full of Intricacies and Difficulties, and scarce possible to be done every time a Person receives the Holy Communion; especially, if accidentally a Christian is to communicate with a sick or dying Neighbour; nor can Ministers themselves be supposed capable of doing all this, when they are on a sudden call'd upon, to administer the Holy Sacrament to Persons that send for them.* But to give a satisfactory Answer to this point, it will be necessary to lay down the Reply in these following Propositions.

1. The Trouble is imagined to be greater than really it is. If People are unwilling, it is an easy matter to pretend Difficulties and Impossibilities. All that I have mentioned, may be done in an Hours time, or less: For it is to be supposed, that every Person is not guilty of all the Sins, nor guilty of the Neglect of all the Duties in the preceeding *Lists*: And how easily may a Person spy those Sins and Neglects he is prone to; and then by the Rule of Queries, mention'd before, see how his Heart stands affected! But, suppose it were a Task of some Difficulty, is Heaven worth nothing? And is the Labour for the Body of that Consequence, that the Soul deserves to be neglected? What if God would not part with an Interest in his Love upon cheaper Terms? Will ye refuse it, and chuse to be miserable? Sure, you would not think so, if you had been but one Moment in Hell. However,

ever, as I said, the Task is not so laborious, as is imagined by Persons who have an Aversion from Goodness.

2. It is confessed, that the Command about Self-examination is general, and concerns both the Good and Bad, both Worthy and Unworthy Receivers; both those who are void of Grace, and those that are filled with the Spirit. But, tho' the Command is general, and obliges the Serious, as well as the Profane; the Compleat, as well as the Half-christian, equally; yet, in the manner of the Performance of it, there cannot but be a very great difference, because the Persons concern'd do differ much in their Tempers, Progress in Goodness, and in their Wants and Necessities; and consequently, to the one it must be more laborious than to the other; and the one hath reason to spend more Time in this Self-examination, than the other; as he who hath suffered his House to become very full of Filth and Dirt, must be at greater Cost and Pains to cleanse it, than he that every day takes care to keep it swept. And therefore,

3. A Man who hath led an ill Life, and thinks of coming to the Table of his Lord and Master; or if he have communicated formerly, and after that, is fallen into any grosser Sin, and gone on in it, whenever he approaches, had need set all the particular Sins God hath forbid in his Gospel, and all the particular Duties commanded in that Book, before him, and ransack all the Actions of his Life, he can remember; to see how far he hath been from the Kingdom of God, and how his Heart is now resolv'd and dispos'd. As to his particular Sins and Neglects; whether he intends to take up, and to set his Face against them; and whether it be his unfeign'd Desire, Purpose, and deliberate Resolution to submit his Neck to the sweet and easy Yoke of *Christ*; of whom he expects Pardon and Salva-

tion, both in this Sacrament, and in the last Day. And as tedious as this Self-examination may appear to such a Person, yet he may thank himself, that his long continuance and boldness in a sinful Life hath made the Task so laborious to him. And, indeed, till such a Man's Love to Sin, and a sinful Life, doth signally abate, and the Bias of his Soul be changed, and turned, it will be necessary for him, for some time at least, as often as he receives the Holy Sacrament, to iterate and repeat this larger Self-examination, to see what Advance he makes in Holiness; and whether there be not some Sins lurking in his Breast, be took no Notice of before. But then,

4. If he find that, after Receiving several times, his Faith, and Love to the Lord *Jesus Christ*, doth signally grow, and his Relish of a sinful Life dies, and a nobler Taste of the Goodness of God, insinuates into his Breast, as his Sins grow fewer, so his Self-examination before the Holy Sacrament need not be so laborious, as before it was. Finding he hath gotten a settled Hatred and Abhorrency of several Sins he formerly delighted in, instead of examining himself about them, he hath Reason to break forth into Praises and Admiration of the Goodness of God, who hath delivered him from the Power of Darkness, and led him to his marvellous Light. In a Word, the Holier, the more melting toward God and Goodness; the more Spiritual, the more obedient to the Commands of the Gospel, a Man or Woman grows, the less Self-examination will serve turn; for, as he grows in Grace, so his Errors and Infirmities abate; and those which remain against his Will, may be easily known, and he may easily take a View of them; nor will it cost him so much Time to take them into Consideration, as the greater Heap of them formerly did; and let him separate those Sins he hath left, and got the Mastery



tery and Conquest of, from those Infirmities which yet against his Desire or Approbation, cleave to him, and the Remainder will soon be examined, and he may soon satisfy himself, whether he be resolved to labour more and more to exterminate them from his Soul; and upon that Account come to the Holy Sacrament, to get greater Strength and Courage against them, by contemplating the love of God and the Cross, the Agonies, and the Tremblings the Lord *Jesus* endureth for them. The Sins a Man hath actually left, need not be examined over again, every time he Receives; but those only he is yet very prone to slip into, and would fain be rid of, to become more conformable to the Lord *Jesus*. So that,

5. He that makes it the Business of his Life to please God in all Places, and in all the Conditions and Concerns of his Life, and is arrived to a Cordial and Practical Love of Goodness, may very conscientiously, after a very small Examination of his Life and Actions, especially if he be straitned in time, come to the Holy Communion; for the Sins he would fain be rid of, he may soon run over, and see whether he goes to this Holy Ordinance with a design to become more Spiritual, and take a final leave of his Sins at the awful sight of the Cross of Christ. And for this reason, not only a serious Minister of the Gospel, who endeavours to lead a very exemplary Life, and to practise what he preaches; but even a conscientious Lay-man who carries about him a constant Zeal and Desire to advance the Glory of God, and his everlasting Salvation, may, upon a very short Examination, receive this Holy Sacrament, either with a sick Friend, or dying Neighbour, and upon a very short Warning too; though at other times, when he hath more time, it will be necessary and convenient to enlarge his Self-examination and

Preparation, thereby to give greater Life to his Faith, and Hope, and Love, and Charity.

6. A Christian may very much save himself the Labour of a tedious Self-examination before he comes to the Holy Sacrament, by a daily Self-examination. And he that every Night surveys the Actions and Discourses, and Desires of that Day, and sets his Accounts even with God, and searches what Temptations have assailed him that Day, and how he hath resisted them; how he hath spent his Time, and what good Thoughts he hath entertained, what Good he hath done; whether he hath watched, and been Conscientious in the Discharge of his Duty, will by this Means come to a true Knowledge of himself; and by breaking the Task thus by little and little, a very short Self-examination will be requisite when he is to come to this Ordinance. This daily Self-examination brings him to a sense of the Corruptions which do most easily beset him, and thereby he comes to know, what it is he must bend his chief Force against, and therefore he hath not much to do when he comes to the Supper of the Lord.

7. Self-examination being properly a Labour of the Mind, I do not doubt, but a poor Day-labourer, or a Servant, or any Man that is obliged to get a Livelihood for himself and Family by working hard, may, in the midst of his lawful Employment, while he sits or walks in his Shop, or is busy with his Hands, apply his Mind to a Survey of Sins, and Errors, and Defects; and examine himself about his Repentance, whether it be sincere or not; and about the Particulars of his former Life, and whether he be sincerely resolved for Spiritual Wisdom, and a Spiritual Mind, and examine himself very acceptably: For it is a great Mistake, that this Self-Examination cannot be performed, but in a Chamber or Closet, and by spending so many Hours in the

the Exercise. It may be performed as we are walking, as we are about our Work; in the Field, as well as at home; at the Plough, as well as in a Study. Though I still urge, that where God hath given a Person a quiet, sedate, and easy Life, free from the Incumbrances of the World, there he justly expects that Men should take different Measures in this Self-examination. A Man, in case of Necessity, can live upon Bread and Water, and think it to be very good Fare; but being in his House, and all conveniences about him, he gratifies his Appetite with greater Variety: And that shews the difference berwixt Labouring People, and those that can take their Ease at home. 'Tis very pleasing to God, to see the poor Man take pains with himself in this Self-examination, even in his busy Hours, and toiling Employment: But of the other who are not necessitated to lead such a Life, he expects they should perform the Task suitable to their Leisure, and Time, and quiet Hours; and thereby express in some measure their Gratitude to God, who hath made this difference between them and the meaner sort. Yet,

8. Though I have told you, that the Sins we have left and forsaken, need not be repeated over again every time we receive the Sacrament; yet it is of very great Use in our private Fasts and Humiliation-days, to take every one of those Sins we have abandoned, and shaken Hands with, into fresh consideration; thereby to engage our selves to a greater Admiration of the Mercy of God, who hath freed us from those Shackles; and of his Patience, that did not cut us off in the midst of those Sins we formerly doated on, but hath spared us, and so ordered things, that we should come to a Sense of our Danger; and vouchsafed unto us Means and Opportunities, whereby we might escape the Pollutions we once wallowed in. So Men who have



been delivered from running in the Night upon a Precipice, visit the fatal Place sometimes to see what a concatenation of Mischiefs they have been preserved from by an Almighty Providence ; and thereby supply themselves with new Arguments, both to magnify the unspeakable Protection, and to improve and enlarge their Gratitude, and to testify their Sense of the Mercy, by charitable Actions, and warmer Devotions for the future.

V. But because Errors may be committed in this Self-examination, as to the manner of the Performance, it will be very expedient, in the last place, to give some Rules, how this Self-examination ought to be qualified.

I. It must be an impartial, no flattering Self-examination. As there is nothing more common to Men, than to run into one Extreme or other, so it happens very often in the Duty before us. Some examine themselves so strictly that they even confound themselves, and run upon the very brink of Despair. Others do it with that foolish tenderness to their Lusts, that they make the Colours too fine, in which they are to draw themselves. Whence it comes to pass, that when they have done sitting, the Picture looks mighty well, but is not to the Life ; and as themselves were the Painters, so it is too evident, that they favoured themselves too much in the Drawing. To take either the little Resemblances of Virtues we find in our selves for real Virtues ; or to satisfy our selves, that the faint Inclinations we have to practise the substantial Duties, are unfeigned and strong Purposes, must necessarily prove deceitful Work. Our Business here must be, not to skin the Wound, but to heal it ; and therefore, where we are apt to think too well of our selves, it would not do a miss to ask either Divines, or Persons we are familiar withal, what

what they think of our Religion ; and that Question our Saviour doth ask his Disciples, *Matth. 16. 13. Whom say Men, that I am?* May not be improper to be put to our Acquaintance, What Men abroad do think of us? And though the Censures of Men, if apparently vain and groundless, ought to be slighted ; yet from the Verdict that other Men give of us, much may be learned sometimes: And if they count us proud, or censorious, or bitter, or sensual, &c. it may serve as a Motive to enquire what there is in us, that may give occasion to others to think of us as they do ; and whether we do not give them too much Ground for those Censures.

2. This Self-examination must ever have a truly spiritual End ; and that End must be, to wash our selves, that we may be clean. If it be only to favour a present Damp upon our Spirits, or to satisfy the Terrors of an unquiet Conscience, or to comply with the Custom and Formality of Preparation, the Self-examination will lose its Virtue and Sweetness : The End must determine its Acceptableness, Soundness, and Sincerity : And he that examines himself, without Reserves, out of a Christian Simplicity, and with an Intent to become more like God, and more like that Saviour, whose Death is remembred in this *Eucharist* ; and more like the Friends of the *Bridegroom*, the Holy *Apostles* ; acts like a Person, for whom is prepared, a *Feast of fat Things*, a *Feast of Wines on the Lees* ; of *fat Things*, full of *Marrow* ; of *Wines on the Lees*, well refined ; as it is said, *Isa. 25. 6.*

3. With this Self-examination must be joyned Earnest Prayers to the Father of Lights, that he who sees in secret, would give us the Spirit of Wisdom and Understanding, whereby we may see the Errors that creep in the Dark ; and are not so palpable as others are. And he that hath Courage to tell his God, *Lord, thou knowest my Heart, and triest*

est my Reins; and thy piercing Eye is a discerner of the Thoughts and Intentions of my inward Man: Thou knowest, I do not wilfully hide any thing from myself; and I am so far from harbouring any secret Lust, or Vanity, or Corruption, that it is the ardent desire of my Soul, that thou wouldst discover to me what Impurity, what Error, what Fault lies lurking in my Breast. I am not afraid, blessed be thy Name, to know the worst of my self. Let down, I pray thee, some of thy gracious Beams into my Heart, whereby I may see the Defects which, by reason of my Blindness, I cannot as yet discover; whatever it be, O Lord; though it be incorporated with my Profit or Pleasure, or with my very Heart, I am resolved to tear it from my Soul. Let me but see it; and, with that Sight, give me Strength and Spiritual Courage, and it shall not stay in that House, which thou hast pleased to chuse for thy Habitation. He that thus dares address himself to God in his Self-examination, discovers the Sincerity of his Soul.

#### The Preceding Considerations reduced to Practice.

**I**F it be necessary to examine our selves before we eat and drink in this Holy Sacrament, than certainly the Churches heretofore were in an Error, that gave the Holy Communion to Children. They did it already, in Cyprian's Time: Innocent I. Pope of Rome, establish'd it. It continued down to St. Austin's Days; and the Custom was, as soon as the Children were baptiz'd, to give them the Holy Communion. Under Charles the Great, about the Year 800, after Christ, they did not only admit Infants to Communicate in the Church after Baptism, but kept part of the Eucharist at home, to give it to dying Children. To this purpose, Ansegius of Liege tells us of a Canon made about that time, viz. That the Presbyter, or Priest, should always have Eucharist, or Sacrament, ready, that in case a Person fell sick,



sick, or a Child should be taken ill suddenly, they might receive, and not die without the Communion. Among the *Aethiopian Christians*, the Custom continues at this Day; and they give the Sacrament to Infants, as soon as they are baptized. The *Christians in Muscovy* give it to Children of Seven Years of Age, because they think, that about that time Children begin to commit actual Sins. And *Hospinian* tells us of a Custom in *Lorraine*, which continued yet in the last Century, among some *Papists*, as a Relick of that ancient Practice of Communicating Infants. The Priest, when he had baptized the Infant, would fetch from the Altar a Consecrated Wafer, and, having taken it betwixt his two Fingers, shew it to the People; and when he hath done, put it up again in the Box, and then wash his two Fingers with Wine, and put some Drops of that Wine in the Infants Mouth: But, as ancient, and as common as this Custom was, to give Infants the Holy Communion; yet the Church of *Rome* it self was at last ashamed of it, and abolished it by a Canon in the Council of *Trent*. That which moved some of the Primitive Churches to begin this Custom, was, that Saying of Christ, *John 6. 53. Except ye eat the Flesh of the Son of Man, and drink his Blood, ye have no Life in you.* This made them think it absolutely necessary to Salvation; and, that Children dying in their Infancy, might not perish, they gave them the Sacrament. But their Mistake lay here, That they took the Spiritual Eating of Christ's Flesh, and drinking his Blood, by a lively Faith, spoken of in that Chapter, for Sacramental Eating and Drinking, or Eating and Drinking in the Holy Sacrament. 'Tis evident, that Christ instituted this Sacrament, with an Intent, we should use it in remembrance of him; which Children are not capable

*Hospin. Hist. Sacram. lib. 2. cap. 2.*

*Conc. Trid. Sess. 5. cap. 4.*

ble of, much less of Self-examination. And therefore, even under the Law, though Infants were Circumcised, yet they were not admitted to eat of the Passover, till they came to the Use of their Reason. Not to mention, that this Sacrament being designed also for Reformation of our Lives, which Infants have no occasion for, at least, no sense of, during that State of Innocence; they can receive no prejudice by not Receiving the Holy Communion, seeing there is not that Necessity for it in them, in point of amendment of Life, that there is in the Adult.

II. Yet from the Necessity of *Self-examination* before this Sacrament, we may very rationally infer, that as soon as young People are able to examine themselves, they ought to come to the Holy Communion. There is an Emphasis in the Apostle's Words, mention'd before; *But let a Man examine himself, and so let him eat and drink*: Which imports, not only that a Person who hath examined himself may come; but withal, that when he is capable of examining himself, he ought to do it, and so come to this holy Ordinance. I reckon, that as soon as young Men and Women are able to understand what Sin, and what Holiness is, what the design of *Christ's* Death is, and what Heaven and Salvation means, they are capable also of *Self-examination*; and consequently of coming to the Holy Communion: And if the Creator be fit to be remembred in the Days of our Youth, the Redeemer of Man can be no improper Object of that Remembrance. It must be admitted, indeed, that the Word *δοκιμάζω*, used by the Apostle, in the Precept of *Self-examination*, is taken from Metallaries, and Lapidists, or Jewellers, that make a very strict examination, whether the precious Stone be truly Oriental or no; and whether there be no Flaw in it. And tho' it  
(being

(being a Word of such Import) implies a very accurate Search into our Ways, and nice Care to be found worthy; which Young Men of Fourteen, or Fifteen, or Sixteen, may be supposed, not so very capable of performing; yet they are able to discern such Sins as they find forbidden in their Catechism, and have been taught to avoid by their Parents, from whom they have learned their Duty to God and Man. And, as the Sins of that early Age cannot be supposed to be very numerous, and a great many of those they have been guilty of before that Age, were committed out of Ignorance, so the Examination is more easily performed; and as their Age and Religion advances, so they will know more. Their early Self-examination makes way for early Gravity, and helps to ripen their Understandings, and is the only way to prevent their falling into the Vices of the Age; and if any thing, next to the Grace of God, can be a Charm against Infection from a debauch'd and irreligious World, this is most likely to be it; I mean, this Self-examination, joyn'd with the Holy Sacrament, for which it is intended, as a proper Preparative.

III. It is not enough, that another Person hath examined us, or doth examine us; but we our selves must take pains in it. Ministers, and Parents, and Friends, by examining of us, may be able to give us very good Directions, and excellent Instructions, how we are to order our Conversation; but to all this must be added our own Labour and Diligence, to see whether we observe those Directions, whether they are acceptable to us, how we relish them, and whether we intend to act accordingly. Up then, Christian, and try thy ways: Be not afraid of Labour. *Labour and Food, saith Philo, have the same Virtue; for as upon a Food a Man's whole Life depends, so upon Labour also depends all that*



that a Man can call good. Therefore, as they that will prolong Life, do not neglect their Food; so he that desires any real or solid Good, must not be afraid of Labour. As Meat is very troublesome and burthensome to a weak Stomach, that hath but little Natural Heat; so to him that hath but little Love to Christ, this Labour of Self-Examination will be burthensome. But, Christian, as thou hast the greatest reason to love the Lord *Jesus*; so, if thou lovest him to any purpose, both this and other Labours will appear very easy; for Love will make them so. See therefore, and enquire, how Concerns stand betwixt God and thine own Soul. Shall thy reason lie useless? Shall that excellent Faculty be employ'd in searching into the Accounts of thy Shop, and not into the State of thy better Part? Is it not worth knowing whether thou art of God, or a Child of the Devil? And whether thou hadst rather grovel in the Dust, like a Muck-worm, or elevate thy Soul, and fix it upon Objects which Angels desire to pry into? Hath God given thee Power to examine thy self, and wilt thou neglect that Power? Though thou canst not Read nor Write, yet thou canst think, and think whether thy Life be according to the Holy Rules, which are observed by other conscientious Christians. Through this Examination thou mayst come to see, what God hath done for thy Soul; and if he hath planted there an abhorrence of that which is evil, and a strong affection to that which is good, how joyfully mayst thou come to this Holy Table, and expect, that God will pour Water upon him that is Thirsty, and Floods upon the dry Ground, and that thou shalt spring up, as among the Grass, and as the Willows by the Water-Courses; *Isai. 44. 3, 4.* He that comes to be acquainted with himself, at the same time, comes to be acquainted with God the Father, and his Son *Jesus Christ*. This is true Policy;

licy ; and as he is the greatest Politician in Temporals, that sees afar off, and considers the events of things, and upon what Causes they depend, and gives Counsel accordingly ; so he is the greatest Politician in Spirituals, that studies himself, acquaints himself with his own heart ; for such a Person looks further than his present Profit, and sensible how this self-acquaintance will be valu'd one day, counsels himself to be expert in that Wisdom ; for it is certain, that in the last day not the great Scholarship of Men, nor their improving of Arts and Sciences, nor their Skill in various Languages, nor their Ability to discourse well, nor their Volubility of Tongue, nor their Rhetorical and Eloquent Speaking, nor their profound Philosophy, nor their diving into the Secrets of Nature will be much admired. These things did well for this World, and might be serviceable to various Sorts and Degrees of Men : But if Persons, with all these Accomplishments about them, overlook'd their own Hearts, cherished Weeds and Vices there, and would take no notice of them, their Parts and Learning will not stand them in great stead in that Day of Retribution. The Poor Christian that ransack'd his Soul often, turn'd over the Leaves of his Conscience, that spiritual Book, on purpose to see his own Spots and Stains, and wash himself clean, out of an holy Emulation of the Purity of the Lord Jesus, he will be counted at last the most prudent Man, that had the quickest Eye, and a Sight sharper than an Eagle ; for, as this gives him a Title to all that Christ hath purchased, and the rich Blessings laid up for him in this Holy Sacrament ; so, in the last Day, it gives him full Possession of all the Trophies of Christ's Victory.

*The P R A Y E R.*

**O** God! Thou see'st the secret Recesses of my Soul: Tho' I may hide my self from my self, yet I cannot hide my self from thee, whose Sight is not darkned by the Night, nor stopp'd by any Object intervening, nor hindered by Walls of Brass, nor weaken'd with the Greatness of the Distance. O Lord! Thou hast commanded me to examine my self, and to search into the Sins and Errors of my Life! What Foes I have; and how many there be that rise against me, that would swallow up my Soul, and devour it; that I may secure my self against their Rage, by taking Sanctuary at the Death of my ever blessed Redeemer, the Lord Jesus! O Lord, I am very apt to do thy Work negligently; I am apt to do it by halves, and superficially, and without any Regard to its Weight and Moment! Thou that knowest my Dulness, my Backwardness, and my Hypocrisy, deliver me, I beseech thee, from my self; and make me partake of that Light, whereby thou meanest to discover the Sins of Men in the last day, when they come to appear before thy Tribunal. By that Light they will see every Deformity, every Enormity, every Exorbitance of their outward and inward Man. That will discover to them, what they have long ago forgotten; and manifest to them, what, for many Years, they have not thought of. That will shew them every Error of their  
Lives,



Lives, to their Confusion and Amazement. That will make them see their Faults so evidently, and so distinctly, that they will not be able to deny them, but be forced to render themselves Prisoners to thy Justice. That will undeceive them in their fond Opinions of their Sins, and pull away the Varnish they have put upon them, and make them appear in their native Hue and Blackness. Oh! vouchsafe me that Light in some measure now, that I may not deceive mine own Soul. Make me Partaker, withal, of the Zeal of thy Justice, and of that Hatred thou bearest against Sin, that I may hate my Sins, as thou dost hate them. I desire to do all things in thy Name, and by thy Assistance. I would willingly come to that Sincerity thou so much delightest in. Oh! Guide my Steps; and if I take false Measures, put me in the right Way again. Oh! Let me not swerve from thy Commandments. Let my Confusion be continually before me, that I may humble my self under thy mighty Hand, and may be exalted in due time, through Jesus Christ our Lord, *Amen.*



## CHAP. XXIV.

Of judging our selves, the Third Preparative Duty, in order to our worthy Receiving the Blessed Sacrament.

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### The CONTENTS.

*Judging our selves, contains Three Acts; Confession of Sin, Self-Condempnation, and inflicting Judgments on our selves. The Nature of these Acts explain'd. This judging our selves, prov'd to be pleasing to God. What it is that makes it so. Confession of Sins, if rightly perform'd, is a great Work. Men are loth to confess those Sins, which they are loth to leave. Carnal Men wonder at the great stir, that some Penitents make. In inflicting Judgments on our selves, the Word of God must be made our Rule. The Prayer.*

- I.  Mention this judging of our selves, as a Duty preparatory for the Holy Sacrament, because it is certain, that St. Paul makes it so. 1 Cor. II. 31. If we would judge our selves, we should not be judged. God's judging of us, or proceeding to Judgment against us, hath in all Ages appeared very terrible to good Men, because it speaks his Anger, and it is a fearful thing to fall into the Hands of the living God,

God, Heb. 10. 31. And therefore David doth so often deprecate God's Judgment, particularly, *Psal.* 143. 2. *Enter not into Judgment with thy Servant, for in thy sight no Man living shall be justified:* And *Psal.* 119. 120. *My flesh trembles for fear of thee, and I am afraid of thy Judgments.* And *Psal.* 66. 3. *How terrible art thou in thy Works, or Judgments!* and though, *Psal.* 26. 1. he prays, *Judge me, O God;* yet by that, he means no more, than that God would plead his Cause, and vindicate his Innocence, which was abused, bespatter'd, and oppress'd by his Enemies. God's judging of us, differs very much from judging our selves; and when we are exhorted to judge our selves, it is not to oblige us, to beg of God to send Judgments upon us; but it is to do something whereby the Judgment of God, we have deserv'd, may be prevented and averted; and upon attending to the scope and drift of the *Apostle* in that Advice, we shall find that it consists, partly in accusing our selves, and confessing our Faults, partly in condemning our selves for the Faults we have committed, and partly in exercising Acts of Justice, and executing Judgment upon our selves, of which we are to speak in order.

II. The first Act of judging our selves, is, confessing our Sins, and accusing our selves, an Act very proper after Self-examination; confessing, I mean, such Sins, as upon strict Examination, we find our selves to have been guilty of, without being afraid of giving our selves Names too harsh, and too reproachful. It's true, no Man is oblig'd to accuse himself of Sins he was never guilty of; and to charge our selves with the Guilt of Fornication, or Adultery, or Murther, or Blasphemy, or Theft, &c. which, through the restraining Grace of God, we never thought of, and have been strangers to, is, to tell God a Lye, except we understand those



Sins in a spiritual Sense ; and, in this case, a Man or Woman may say, they have been guilty of Adultery, by departing wickedly from their God, whom they were solemnly marry'd, and join'd to, in Baptism, and the Supper of the Lord, and by doting upon a miserable transitory World, which St. James calls *Spiritual Adultery*, Jam. 4. 4. And, upon this Account, a Man may say, he hath been guilty of Blasphemy, in dishonouring the Gospel by his vain and wicked Life, whereby he hath given occasion to the Enemies of the Lord to blaspheme him, and speak evil of Religion ; and, after the same manner he may justly accuse himself of Murder, if he have often stab'd his Neighbour's Reputation by Slanders, Reproaches, and evil Surmises, against him, and disparaging of him to those, from whom he expected signal Kindnesses. But, set aside this spiritual Sense, a Man is not oblig'd by any Law of God, to confess that he hath been formerly guilty of Sins he never committed, to his best Remembrance ; but in those he hath actually run into, either wilfully or by surprise, he ought to be his own severe accuser, especially to God, whom he hath thereby grievously offended ; and he truly judges himself, that, upon a deep search of his Heart, finding what Precepts of the Gospel he hath wittingly acted against, cries out, *Lord ! I have been that rotten Sheep of thy Flock, which, by my ill Example have infected others ! I have been that Viper thou hast put into thy Bosom, and which have threatned Death to those Bowels that gave it Life ; and been a Rebel, by my monstrous Ingratitude, to my Father which is in Heaven ! I have been that Prodigal, that hath run away from his Father's House, and travelled into a far Country, as far as Hell it self ! I have been that Fool, that mad Man, that hath said to his Soul, thou hast Goods laid up for many Years, eat and drink, and be merry ! I have been that Satan, that Adversary,* that

that hath savour'd the things that be of Men, more than the things which be of God! I have been that bewitch'd Creature, that hath begun in the Spirit, and thought to end in the Flesh! I have been that Judas, that hath betray'd the Son of Man with a Kiss! I have been that brutish Man, that, by my careless Life, hath as good as said, the Lord sees not, neither will the God of Jacob regard it! O that I had Wings like a Dove, for then would I fly away and bewail my Folly in some Wilderness! But in this Confession, or Self-accusation, some necessary Rules must be observed.

1. A Man must not content himself with general Confessions, but, in the Accusation, descend to particular Errors and Neglects of his Life. General Confessions do well in Publick *Liturgies* and *Offices of the Church*, in which, a whole Congregation is to joyn; but in Private, the Case very much alters. The Church, according to the old Saying, *Non judicat de occultis*, judges not of secret things, and knows not what particular Sins every Man is guilty of, and one may have stain'd his Soul with certain Sins, which another hath not; and therefore wisely prescribes only general Acknowledgements of Offences, that the whole Assembly may comply with the Duty; but in Private, every Man knows, or may know, where the Shoe doth most pinch him, and therefore here particular Confessions are necessary. He that in private contents himself with general Confessions, shews no great desire to be better; and, notwithstanding his Confessions, may allow himself in abundance of Sins, and miscarry, and perish, for all his general Confessions. But he that in his Confessions specifies the particular Acts wherein he hath walked contrary to God, discovers an earnest desire to grow in Grace; and, in this, St. Paul shews us an Example, 1 *Tim.* 1. 13. where he doth not say, I have been a great Sinner, but a *Blasphemer*, spoke ill of

the Way to Life, a *Persecuter*, and made havock of the Churches of God *injurious*, done great injuries to St. Stephen, and to abundance of other Christians. In a Word, such a Person, by his particular Confession, deals faithfully with his own Soul, and, by mentioning the particular Diseases that annoy him, manifests his earnest desire of a Cure, whereas general Confessions leave the Soul ignorant, dull, careless, and unaffected with the great Concerns of Salvation. And tho' a Person, every time he accuses himself, or confesses his Errors, is not bound to enumerate all the particular Sins of his Life he can charge his Memory with, yet if he never did it before, it's fit he should do it, at least when first he receives the Holy Sacrament, and at other times, confess such Sins, as he finds himself most inclin'd to, and most apt to harbour in his Bosom.

2. These Confessions must be accompanied, especially the Confessions before the Sacrament, with aggravations of our Offences, and with shame and confusion of Face. I joyn these two together, because aggravating of them is the Cause of that Confusion, and he that reflects in his Confessions, what light, what knowledge, what checks of Conscience, what motions of God's Spirit, what goodness of God, what mercy, what patience, what promises, what threatnings he hath sinn'd against, what time he hath lost, what opportunities he hath neglected, what a gracious, what a merciful God he hath offended, even love it self, and sweetness, and beauty it self, and what blessings, what priviledges, what advantages, what offers he hath slighted, will find himself obliged to have very low and mean thoughts of himself. This was the *Publican's Case*, Luke 18. 13. *who standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his Eyes to Heaven, but smote upon his Breast, saying, God be merciful to me a Sinner.* He was ashamed and confounded. His Conscience told him, how



how unworthily he had dealt with his Creator, how strangely he had carried himself to God, his best and greatest Friend, how unthankful and how base he had been to his most gracious Benefactor, and how strangely he had carried himself to the best of Beings. He was confounded with the thoughts of his vileness, and conscious of his guilt, he cast his Eyes to the Ground, unable to look his offended Father in the Face. His Heart was full of Grief, Sorrow sat heavy on his Soul; and though his Tongue could not express his particular Acts of Injustice, Oppression, Pride, Anger, and greediness after the World, yet his Mind confess'd them, thought of them, his Heart was ready to break at the dismal sight, and this was a very acceptable Confession.

3. These Confessions must be joyn'd with invincible purposes, to endeavour after a better and more Spiritual Temper. So the Wise Man tells us; *He that confesseth his Sins and forsakes them, shall find Mercy, Prov. 28. 13.* Without this Qualification, our Confessions are mere Lip-services, and receive not one gracious Look from above; nay, are accounted no better than *Israel's Devotion, Hos. 10. 1. Israel is an empty Vine; He brings forth fruit unto himself: Why unto himself? The reason is, because, in that Fruit, he aim'd not so much at God's Glory, as his own Profit: Nor was any Person the better for it; the Design was Selfish, it was just to satisfy the present terror within, no love of God lay at the bottom; the ground of all was Self-love, and God had nothing to do with it. The same may justly be said of him that confesses, but is not concern'd, whether his Flesh be subdued to the Spirit, or not. Such a Confession is his own Invention, it is not that Confession which God requires. If he confesses, it must not be to himself, for God regards it not; and indeed, till this actual*

endeavour to forsake them is added to the Confession, our Sins continue still in God's Books of Accompt, look still as black as ever, not one of them is blotted out, for the Enmity against God is still maintain'd, and whilst that lasts, it naturally follows, that God and we cannot be Friends.

III. *The second Act of judging our selves, is, upon this Confession to condemn our selves.* And indeed, if the Soul be truly awake, and the Heart sincerely sensible of its Errors and Miscarriages, the Penitent cannot but condemn himself and acknowledge, that the Judgments threatned in the Word of God, are due to him, and cry, *Ab! my God, and my Lord! who shall deliver me from the Body of this Death, from this confluence of Misery! I have deserv'd with Adam, to be thrown out of Paradise, and to be for ever forbid eating of the Tree of Life! I have deserved to drown with the first World, or to be consumed for ever, as Sodom and Gomorrah. I have deserv'd the sudden and unnatural death of Nadab and Abihu; to be stoned with Achan; to be struck with Leprosy, as Miriam; to be swallowed up alive by the Earth, as Dathan and Abiram. I have deserv'd Manasseh's Prison, and Zedekiah's Chains, and, what is worse, the everlasting Chains of Darkness. I acknowledge, that I have deserved, it should be more tolerable for Infidels in the Great Day, than for me; for I have seen the mighty Works of God, and continu'd a Stranger to Repentance. I have deserv'd to be call'd upon at Mid-night, as that careless Man, thou Fool, this Night thy Soul shall be requir'd of thee, and whose shall be, which thou hast provided? To this Wretch that is before thee, belongs nothing but Wrath and Indignation. On this Head of mine, thou mightest justly discharge the Ordinance of Justice, and pour out the Vials of thy Wrath! On me thou mightest justly rain Snares, and Fire and Brimstone. I have deserv'd to be plagu'd with Diseases, torment'd with grievous pain, haunted by pa-*  
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*nick Terrors. If any of these Judgments do not fall upon me, it is thy Patience, not my Goodness, and I may wonder I have escaped them all this while. I have deserved to be made a Prey to that Devil, whose Temptations I have swallowed with Greediness. Instead of rejoicing over me to build me up, thou mightest justly rejoice over me to destroy me. Justly, O Lord, thou mightest send upon me trembling of Heart, and fainting of Eyes, and sorrow of Mind. I have deserved, that my Life should hang in doubt before me, that I should fear Day and Night; that in the Morning I should say, Would God it were Even, and at Even, would God it were Morning. Mercy, Lord, I have deserved none. The Crumbs that fall from thy Table, are Blessings too good for me; If I deserve any thing, it is thy Rod, thy Scourges, thy Waves, thy Billows, and a horrible Tempest. To condemn, is the proper Act of a Judge, and he that thus condemns himself, judges himself.*

*IV. The third Act of judging our selves, is, to inflict Judgments upon our selves. By which, I do not mean maiming or wounding our selves, or cutting off an Arm, or a Leg, or whipping our selves; but inflicting such Judgments on our selves for the Sins we have been guilty of, and so often fall into, as are neither hurtful to the Body, nor unprofitable, nor prejudicial to the Soul, but serve rather to bring the Soul into an excellent Temper. These Judgments, tho' the Design of them is to meliorate the Soul, yet they are in a great measure to be inflicted on the Body, because the Body tempts the Soul to great Extravagances, and by presenting a Thousand pleasant Objects to her, leads her into Nets, and Snares, and Dangers. The Judgment therefore must be laid upon that part, which is the Tempter, and that being under restraint, the Soul may more freely move toward her Center, God blessed for evermore. It's true, naturally, no Man hates*



hates his own Flesh, but cherishes it, and makes much of it; but Grace, and the Gospel, teaches us to treat it with greater rigor. To be too fond of the Body, in St. Bernard's sense, is a *Charity which destroys Charity, a Mercy which is full of Cruelty, for this is to serve the Body, in order to kill the Soul; Is this Charity, saith he, to tender the Body and to neglect the Soul? To caress the Handmaid, and to let the Mistress starve? Let no Man think, that for being thus merciful, he will ever obtain Mercy.* So that the Flesh and Body are to be treated as a wild or unruly Horse, if we curb him not, he will give us a fall. Our Bodies are greater Enemies than we are aware; they are Friends too, but the Hurt they do too often to our Souls, shews, they are greater Enemies than Friends, and therefore the Fathers do so often call the Flesh, the *Grave of the Soul; a Prison, where we are held Captive; and a Dungeon, where we sit in Darkness.* The *Platonists* used to say, that our Souls, deriving their Original from Heaven, are sent into this World, to shew forth the Praises of God here on Earth, as the Angels do in Heaven; but the Body the Soul is in, is a kind of enchanted Castle, in which the Soul, thro' the Flatteries of the Flesh, forgetting too often her nobler Exaltation, is diverted from her glorious Designs, and debased to vile Employments; And to this purpose, *Seneca*, That the Body is the weight and punishment of the Soul, lying heavy upon it, ready to sink it, and putting Shackles upon her, if Philosophy do not make a Reformation. The Body therefore, being such a treacherous Servant, must feel the effects of our Justice, as it hath been the great instrument of the Sins we have committed, that it may be more modest in its Desires. And accordingly we find, that good Men in all Ages, when they have sat as Judges upon themselves, to shew their detestation of the Sins they have been guilty of, have

have inflicted Judgments on that part, which is most sensible of any thing that is uneasy, not out of any ill will to it, for it is God's Creature, but to preserve both Body and Soul unto Salvation. So David punished himself for his Sins, sometimes by mingling his Drink with weeping, Psal. 102. 9. Sometimes by making Sackcloth his Garment, Psal. 66. 11. Sometimes by weakning his Knees with Fasting and Prayer, Psal. 109. 24. Sometimes by making his Bed swim with Tears, Psal. 6. 6. Sometimes by great Acts of Self-denial, as overcoming Shimei's Malice with Patience and Meekness, 2 Sam. 16. 10. And delivering him that without cause was his Enemy, Psal. 7. 4. And keeping Fasts and Humiliation-days, for the recovery of those that were his Enemies, Psal. 35. 13. Sometimes by lying all Night upon the Earth, or Floor, 2 Sam. 12. 16. Sometimes by rising at Midnight to praise God, Psal. 119. 61. So the penitent Publican punish'd himself by a violent smiting his Breast, Luke 16. 13. So Mary Magdalene punish'd herself, by washing the Feet of the Lord Jesus with her Tears, and wiping them with the Hair of her Head, Luke 7. 37. So Zaccheus punish'd himself, by giving the half of his Goods to the Poor, and by four-fold Restitution, Luke 19. 7. So St. Paul punish'd himself, by keeping under his Body, and bringing it into subjection, 1 Cor. 9. 27. By making himself a Servant to all, that he might gain the more, 1 Cor. 9. 19. By labouring Day and Night, that he might not be chargeable to the Church, 1 Thess. 2. 9. By denying himself in Marriage, 1 Cor. 9. 5. So Daniel punish'd himself for his own and his People's Offences, three Weeks together, by eating no pleasant Bread, by avoiding Flesh and Wine, and forbearing to anoint himself, Dan. 10. 2, 3. So the Primitive Believers punished themselves by various Self-denials in the Pleasures, Satisfactions, and Recreations of the Flesh, and of the World, thereby to express

express their Anger, either against Sin in general, or against some particular Sins they had run into. But the most usual Judgment that good Men have ever inflicted on themselves, as a Testimony of their Displeasure against themselves, for offending God, hath been Fasting and Prayer, or chastening their Flesh by frequent Fasts spent in deprecations of God's Judgments, and in other exercises of Humiliation; and when Men have said to them, Why are you so cruel, as not to spare your Flesh, they have answer'd, We spare, or use it, as we do the Earth, which we plough and cut with Coulters, that it may bring forth more Fruit.

V. This judging our selves in all its acts, is certainly very pleasing to God, especially before we come to the Holy Communion, else *St. Paul* would never have told us, in the Passage mention'd in the beginning of this Chapter, that, by doing so, we do put a stop to God's judging of us. So that we have reason to believe, that God upon our accusing our selves, or humble Confessions, stops the Mouth of the *Accuser of our Brethren*, which is open against us; who this is, we may learn from *Rev. 12. 10.* even the *Devil*, who brings severe Accusations against us before God Night and Day; and as he wants neither Wit nor Malice to do it, so we have an instance of it in the History of *Job*, *Chap. 1. Ver. 9.* Where appearing among the Sons of God, whether wrapt up in a dark Cloud, or in the form of an Angel of Light, is not said, but among the Angels, that gave an account of their Negotiations here on Earth, to God, he appear'd; and as those ministring Spirits were commending *Job* for his exemplary Virtue, so he, displeas'd at the fair Character, immediately seeks to blast and sully it, by Aspersions and Misconstructions; and thus, we must suppose he deals with other Persons that have the same



same Inclinations to Virtue, for those Examples are recorded in Scripture, not only to tell us what happened just at such a time, but what will happen in future Ages, under the same Circumstances. And therefore, tho' our Actions be never so innocent, nay, tho' our good Works be never so sincere, yet they shall not want his false Glosses, and Comments, and Misconstructions; and where our Actions are ill, we must expect he will aggravate them, make them worse, and blacken them, to an high degree. But where the Penitent says all the ill he can of himself, gives as bad a Description in a manner of himself, as the Enemy can do; prostrates himself before God, grants all that is brought against him by the Devil, with any colour of Truth, is so far from palliating his Follies, that he unfolds and lays them open before God, and makes as full a Narrative of them as he can, pleads guilty to all that is laid at his door. This ingenuous Accusation, or Confession, dashes the Devil's Attempts, and at the sight of it, the Bowels of Almighty Mercy yearn and melt, and the Enemy is bid to spare his Pains; and the Accusations that drop from the Penitent's Mouth, are much sweeter in the Ears of God, than those which the base Foe brings forth from an envious and malicious Breast. This Self-accusation, in the Penitent, is pleasing Rhetorick in Heaven; God hears the humble Orator, is delighted with his sincerity, and charges the Enemy to hold his Peace. And as this Self-accusation renders the Accusations of the Devil against us ineffectual, so our condemning our selves blots out the Hand-writing that is against us, and makes void the Sentence of Condemnation our Sins have deserv'd, and this is to conform to God's Justice, as well as to his Precepts; God looks upon our Sins, as having deserved unquenchable Fire; and, by his Conscience, tells the Sinner, Thou art an

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Heir of Damnation, and a Child of Wrath; and where the Sinner Eccho's the Thunder of God, and answers in the same Voice and Language of Condemnation, is both sensible, and owns, that he hath deserv'd the Punishment that Rebels do; this makes admirable Musick in Heaven, Musick so delightful, that God changes the Voice of Terror into a still one, and the Accents of Wrath into softer strains of Mercy. In this Self-condemnation, if it be hearty, God hath his end; for when he threatned the Sinner with Condemnation, it was to oblige him to condemn himself; the end being gain'd, God's Condemnation ceaseth, and, as it was at *Athens*, a free and ingenious Confession of a Fault saved the Malefactor's Life, so this condemning our selves and throwing a black Stone into the Box against our selves, renders God so favourable, as to let us draw out a white one, the sign of a gracious Absolution; our adjudging our selves to the everlasting Prison, frees us from it, and our Sentence against our selves, makes so great an alteration in God's Sentence against us, that Justice gives place to Mercy, the Judge descends from the Tribunal, gives us his Hand, and talks of nothing less than gathering us with everlasting kindness. The same must be affirm'd of inflicting Judgments upon our selves. It is of that power, that even the temporal Judgments, which were design'd against us, are either with-held, or remov'd upon it; or if not all, yet such as would, have been most afflictive and painful, and most durable; in doing so, we do that which God would have done, and doing it voluntarily, and of our own accord, we escape the Judgment of God: For God having a mind to stop us in our sinful career, intended to deprive us of our Ease, either by Sickness, or by Losses, or some other trouble or disaster; and since we voluntarily deprive our selves of our Ease and  
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Quiet, and sensual Satisfaction and Repose, by inflicting something that's irksome to Flesh and Blood upon our selves, God looks, as it were, upon his Judgment, as needless, and supersedes it. The King of Israel, 1 Kings 21. 27. makes but an external shew of afflicting himself, and he got the fearful Judgment threatned him by *Elijah*, transferr'd from himself to his wicked Posterity; what then may we think of these Acts of vindictive Justice upon our selves, if the Heart joyn with the outward Man, and the Soul bear her share in the Mortification, as well as the Body. How the Pagan King of *Nineveh*, his Nobles, and his People, punish'd themselves for their Sins, is graphically described, *Jon. 3. 6, 7, 8, 9.* And what follows, *v. 10. God saw their Works, that they turned from their evil ways, and God repented of the Evil, he said he would do unto them, and did it not.*

VI. That which renders this judging our selves so acceptable to God, next to the merits of our ever blessed Jesus, with whom alone God is well pleased, and for whose sake it is, that he is kind and favourable to us, as to any thing we do; That which, next to this, renders this accusing, condemning, and inflicting Judgments upon our selves, so acceptable to God, are,

1. The Humility that appears in it. That's the pleasing sight, and the glorious thing, which the high and lofty One delights in. That's the Flower God loves to smell to, the beautiful Garment he loves to see the King's Daughter in, the sweet Frame he hath made so many gracious Declarations to: He sees the Soul abominating her self for her Abominations; and an huge sense of her own vileness over-spreads all that is within her. He beholds, what lowly Thoughts the penitent Creature hath of himself, and how despicable he is in his own Eyes,



Eyes, and what strong apprehensions he hath of God's greatness, and his own vileness; *That* attracts the Divine Favour, *that* inclines and draws that Sovereign Benevolence, *that*, in a manner, compels the Almighty into Thoughts of Peace toward him. This Humility is the Image of his own Son, and with that Face he is ever pleased. The Soul having no Opinion of her self, God conceives the greater of her. The Waters of Heaven stay not upon the tops of Mountains, but roll down into the humble Valleys, there the Rain gathers, and causes Fertility, and a nobler Verdure.

2. There appears in this judging our selves a willingness to do any thing to be reconciled to God, and that's another thing which very much takes with the Father of the Spirits of all Flesh; He that accuses, condemns, and inflicts Judgments upon himself, discovers a longing desire to be receiv'd into God's Favour upon any terms, and shews, that he cares not whatever it cost him, so he may be but so happy, as to enjoy that Sunshine. His great concern is, how he shall be pardon'd for what's past; as for the future, he will make no Bargains with his God, but is content to hear his Voice in all things that he shall say unto him. He is willing to run upon what Errand soever God shall think fit to send him; willing to be advised, counselled, and directed by him; willing to forego all Interests, so he may but have one in his Love, and kinder Smiles, and may have leave to call him Father, and to look upon him as his God, as his Lord, and as his reconciled Father; and this willingness is the Plant God loves to water with Celestial Dew. Indeed it is a Plant of his own Planting, and an effect of his writing his Law in the inward Parts, and upon that it follows, *I will forgive their Iniquity, and remember their Sins no more, Jer. 31.*



33, 34. But this doth properly belong to the fourth preparatory Duty, which is Self-resignation, whereof more in the following Chapter.

*The Preceding Considerations reduced to farther Practice.*

I. **C**onfession of Sins is no such trivial, slight and easy thing, as Men commonly make of it. The Confession that a great many Men make to God, in Publick especially, while their Thoughts are wandring, their Eyes staring upon sensual Objects, their Souls feeling no compunction, no remorse, no grief, and their Minds without any lively apprehension of God's Holiness, and their own Vileness; such Confessions, instead of obtaining God's pardon and forgiveness, are preparatives and attractives of his Indignation. Alas! Sinner, that's no Confession, where thy Lips only speak thy Sorrow and Offences, and thy Heart still goes after Covetousness. In this Case, thou dost but speak into the Air, whilst thou confessest not with shame, and Confusion of Face, and with purposes strong and masculine, strong as Mount Sion, to offend thy God wilfully no more; such Confessions reach not the Throne of Grace and Mercy, but, like Smoak, are dispersed in the ascent, and cause no Delight, but in the Powers of Darkness, who are glad to see thee play with Religion, and jest with Devotion.

II. It is a certain Rule, where Men are loth to forsake their Sins, they will be loth to confess them too. There are divers Actions of Human Life, which being very pleasing to the Flesh and suited to the Humour of the Age, and such as preserve our Credit and Reputation with Men, which we overlook, take to be no Sins, indeed are loth to be

depriv'd of them, and therefore, do not so much as mention them in our Confessions. Search thy Heart, Christian, and take a serious view of thy Dress, thy Habit, thy Looks, thy Behaviour, thy Speeches, and thy Conversation, and see, whether thou hast not reason to suspect many things, of being contrary to the stricter Rules of the Gospel; yet thou art loth to know them, loth to own them, loth to confess them, as Sins, and all because thou hast no mind to part with them. Thy wanton looks and glances; thy lascivious gestures, and postures, and dresses; thy striving for Places, and discontent at other Men's omitting to give thee the Honour thou fanciest to be due to thee; thy despising and scorning thy Neighbour in thy Heart; thy touchiness at Trifles; thy secret Injustice; thy careless and unprofitable Talk; thy gaudy Attire, which feeds thy Pride; thy delight in imitating the looser and more wanton sort of People; thy mispending thy Time in dangerous Sights and Recreations; thy neglect of reading the Word, and praying with thy Family; thy easy exceptions at thy Neighbour's Actions; thy wilful misconstructions of Mens Words; thy hidden things of dishonesty; thy doing evil, that good may come out of it; thy extenuations of Sin, thy putting favourable names upon what thou art loth to leave, &c. What Man of sense, and who reads the Word of God but must suspect, that these things, and such like, are disagreeable to the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ? And yet, because thou wouldst fain preserve and keep all these, or some of these, or others, that are not unlike these, thou art willingly ignorant of their sinfulness, or wilfully forgettest them, or dost carelessly pass them by, and confessest only such Sins, as thou canst not well avoid acknowledging. Thou thinkest, if once thou confessest these things to be Sins, thou must be forc'd to leave them; for indeed,

indeed, it is perfect impudence to tell God, that I sin against him in such things, and yet to go on in committing of them. And therefore, the only advice that can be given in this case, is this, Look upon Heaven as worth doing any thing to gain it, and thou wilt not be afraid, either of knowing thy particular Sins, or of confessing of them, or of bending the force and powers of thy Soul against their Insinuations.

III. We may easily guess at the reason, why a carnal Man wonders at the stir a Penitent keeps to be reconciled to God ; He sees not, he knows not, what Poison there is in Sin. A Person, who never troubled his Head much about Religion, seeing a Man or Woman take on for their Offences, accuse themselves, condemn themselves, and inflict Judgments of Fasting, of Mortification, and of Self-denial, upon themselves, no doubt, will admire what ails the Fool to keep such a whining and howling, and put himself to such needless Troubles to recover the Favour of God, which, he fancies, is to be had at as easy a rate, as Childrens Smiles, and Infants Tears. Indeed, if the love of God may be had with a Wish, and a Man could no sooner send for it, but have it ; or were it a thing we could command to attend us at a Minute's warning, prostrations and lying on the Ground, and Sackcloth, and Alms-giving in larger proportions, and all the rigorous Ceremonies of Repentance, would be phantastical, and a mere Distemper of the Brain ; but when the Men, whom God favour'd much, vouchsaf'd his Inspirations to, and who conversed with the Fountain of Wisdom, with him, that is the Way and the Life, did all this, and much more, and recommended the same Acts of Mortification to their Successors, and God himself expresses the welcome Dress of Repentance, as to



the external part, in such things as these, *Jer.* 6. 26. *Jer.* 7. 29. There we must give Men leave to laugh, to wonder, and to think us distemper'd for doing so strange! Men should not see the necessity of denying their Bodies in that ease and latitude they are so apt to take, in order to a better Life, when it is evident, that the Flesh, in the Circumstances it is under naturally, is in a continual fermentation of evil desires, and covets altogether sensual Satisfactions, without considering, whether they are agreeable to Reason, or no; and, like *Solomon's* Horse-leech, cries still, *Give, Give*; and if a Man gives his Eyes, or Taste, the pleasure they desire to day, to morrow they shall still crave more; so that if a severe Mortification do not stop, and cast them off, especially if he intends to be saved, he will continue a carnal Man to his dying Day. It hath been the practice of all the Primitive Saints, to inflict seasonable Judgments on themselves; not one, but the greatest part, have taken that way; and the reason is clear, for we must become Saints by the Spirit of the Cross, which is evidently a Spirit of Mortification both of Soul and Body: The design of Holiness is to make us conformable to the Temper of our Saviour; and if his Spirit be in us, we shall be desirous to die to the World, and have great inclinations to suffer with him; and this is not to be done, but by bridling both Soul and Body, thro' a severe Mortification.

IV: In inflicting Judgments upon our selves, the Word of God must be our Guide. He that should use all the Mortifications he meets with in Ecclesiastical History, especially in the Fourth and Fifth Centuries after Christ, might run himself into great Errors and Inconveniencies. The Scripture is ever the safest Rule, which, when Men have forsaken, and thought to do more than is commanded, or re-

commended by Examples in that Book, they have been often left exposed to great Temptations. He that follows an Example of penitential Rigor, recorded in Scripture, though some imprudence may mingle with the imitation, yet it is an Error of the right Hand. There have been excesses of Devotion in all Ages, and even good Men have sometimes run beyond the Bounds prescribed them by Almighty God, into Superstition, especially in things relating to voluntary afflictions of the Body; and from hence have grown those abuses in Popery, where Penances have swallow'd the measures of substantial Piety, and Men's inflicting of Judgment upon themselves, hath been a means to make them neglect Faith, Judgment and Mercy. This shews the necessity of keeping close to the Rule of Scripture, which, besides the Precepts, hath thought fit to record such Examples, as are sufficient to instruct us both in the nature of Repentance, and the Rigors that in some cases are to bear it company. It's certain, that in some Persons, strong Habits of Sin will not be dissolved or broke, but by Corrosives, and violent Remedies; and where a Man sees, that the Corruption, which cleaves to him, baffles all softer Applications, he must needs save himself from being undone, by lancing the Wound: *Maimonides*, the learned Jew, in his Rules of *Ethicks*, gives this advice to his Disciples, that would arrive to any considerable degree in Virtue. He, saith he, that hath been guilty of one Extreme, i. e. He that finds an Habit of a certain Sin in himself, to become good, must, at first at least, run into the opposite Extreme of the Virtue, which is its contrary, till he be qualified to walk in the middle Way without danger; i. e. He that finds himself very cholerick and passionate, to arrive to an Habit of meekness, must at first run into an excess of meekness, and be patient, and silent, and contented,

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even under Injuries and Actions, that, in some measure, deserve his Anger, and continue thus for some time, till his Soul be quieted like a weaned Child, and then he may abate of that Excess, and use his Meekness with greater discretion; so he that hath been Proud, to mortify that ill Habit, or Extreme, must apply himself to the other, and be Humble, even to Contempt and Reproach, so long, till his stubborn Affections be subdued, and then he may use his Humility with greater moderation. We see, by this, that Jews as well as Christians, are sensible, that without a rigor and severe Discipline, there is no arriving to any height of Goodness and Religion; yet as this inflicting Judgments upon our selves, is a thing of great use in the weighty Work of true Repentance, and in the support of a serious Life; so care must be taken, that all Opinion of Merit be laid aside in the Practice of it, for if such a Worm get into the Timber of the Sanctuary, it soon rots it; nor must we think, that after we have exercised such Acts of Justice upon our selves, for the Sins we have committed, we may, upon the Credit of it, take fresh Liberty to offend God. The Design of it is, to mortify our Appetite to Sin, and therefore must not prove Fewel of that Fire. To this must be added Discretion and Moderation in the management of these Acts of Justice, and, as by inflicting upon our selves the Discipline of Fasting and Humiliation before the Holy Sacrament, not a few Christians find much Comfort, if their Bodies be able to bear it; so in times of Sicknes, or bodily Weakness, this inflicting of Judgment on our selves, becomes useless and unnecessary, for, in these Cases, God inflicts Judgments, and therefore we need not: All we have to do at such times, is, to kiss the Rod, and to bear God's gentle Corrections, as things we have both deserv'd, and are intended for the renewing of our inward Man. Our *English Histories* tell us of Two Men, in the time of Popery,



Popery, one, who upon his Death-bed, when the Priest came to him with the Holy Sacrament, would be dragg'd like a Traitor out of his Bed, to the place of the Priesthood; and another, who, hearing the Bishop was come to administer the Sacrament to him, would needs crawl out of his Bed half naked, with an Halter about his Neck to receive it: But as I know not, what Motives or Impulse they might have for these Actions, so I am loth to judge, whether they did ill, or not.

*William de Raley  
and Wil. Longspe.*

*The P R A Y E R.*

**M**Y Lord, and my God! my Shepherd, my Master, my Helper, and the Lifter up of my Head, my Light, my Way, my Wisdom, my Righteousness, my Sanctification, my Redemption! O, how I could be revenged on those Madnesses, Follies, Vanities, I have been guilty of! I do not only confess them unto thee, O thou searcher of all Hearts! but I could even bruise, and wound, and tear myself, for being so basely, and so monstrously ungrateful to the best of Masters, if that were a Sacrifice pleasing unto thee! How stupid, how senseless have I been! How averse from that, which is my greatest Interest! Ah! how like a blind Creature have I groped in the dark, and thought my self secure and safe, while I have stood upon the brink of destruction! How bold and daring have I been, and what Pains have I taken for Pleasures and Recreations, which besides the unreasonableness, and transitoriness,

and inconstancy of them, could not be expiated neither, O dearest Saviour, but by thy Blood and Death! O, how heavy, how dreadful, must my Sins be, that require so costly a satisfaction! O Eternal Father, To see what thou hast done for my Salvation, To see how, for my sake, thy Son, thine only Son, is in a manner left destitute, without Help, without Assistance, without Comfort, what can I think but that in some respect thou didst love me more than him? That I might rejoyce, he must be sorrowful to a Prodigy; that I might be healed, he must be wounded; that I may be cleansed, he must spill his precious Blood! O, how faithful art thou to forlorn Man! Thou hast promised to restore him, and behold, Thou givest the richest Treasure of Heaven to effect it. Ah! how can I see my dear Redeemer weep, and not weep my self! He grieves not for his own Sins, but for mine; he bewails not his own Faults, but my Transgressions; he never sinned, but I am he that hath offended thee a thousand times! I beseech thee, accept of the Oblation of thy dear Son, and blot out all my Transgressions! Accept of that incomparable Sacrifice, and forget the Injuries I have offered thee! I should be afraid of being sent away empty from thy Throne (my Sins are so many and so great) but that I know thy Son's Merits are greater than my Sins! If my Sins and his Goodness, my Transgressions and the Merits of his bitter Passion, were laid in a Ballance together, these would weigh far heavier than mine Offences!

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What Crime so great, that such a Sorrow, such Affliction, such Obedience, such Humility, such invincible Patience, and, what is more than all this, such infinite Love cannot expiate? What Iniquity can there be in the World, above which the Death of Christ doth not preponderate! O Heavenly Father! I have nothing of mine own to offer thee! But I offer thee my Saviour, my Redeemer, thine only Son, with all possible Devotion and Gratitude! Accept of this unspeakable Grief and Anguish, known only to him and to thy self, for my Sins, and that Grief I should have, and do not feel! Accept of his bloody Sweat and Tears, for want of my Tears! Accept of his most fervent Prayers, for my dulness and deadness in Prayer! Accept of all that ever he did, and suffer'd for my great and multiplied Transgressions! I accuse my self for my Carnality, I condemn my self for my backwardness to serve thee, I am willing to inflict Judgments upon my self for my innumerable Follies; yet even these Services will look dull, and weak, and imperfect, except thou art pleased to look upon them, through the Merits of thy dear Son! O blessed Jesu, who can comprehend thy Charity! O pour into my Heart true Contrition, soften my harden'd Heart into true Compunction, give to mine Eyes abundance of Tears, that I may bewail the many Indignities I have offered to thee! Deal not with me after my Sins. Let thy bitter Passion step in betwixt thy Father's Anger, and my miserable Soul! And whatever mine  
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Iniquities have deserv'd, let thy Death atone for them, and let thy Blood wash them away ! O thou, who hast overcome the World and the Prince thereof, overcome all my rebellious and inordinate Affections ! Let nothing separate betwixt thy Love and me ! Remove and conquer that Disagreeableness, that is betwixt my Nature and thy Holiness ; and as thou wast obedient to thy Father, even to the Death of the Cross, so make my Soul obedient to thee in all things ! O let me see, and feel, that there is nothing so vile, so abject, so unworthy as I am ; and, in this sense, let me admire thy Love, that it may appear great and wonderful to me, and dash all those Excuses and Delays, I have pretended too long, to cloak my unwillingness to please thee. What can melt my Heart, if thy Love cannot melt it ? O melt it by that Fire, and purge away all my Dross, and all my Tin, that, being purified by thee, I may enjoy the Comforts of that Purity for ever. Amen, Amen.

C H A P.



## CHAP. XXV.

Of Self-Resignation, the Fourth Preparatory Duty, in order to a Worthy Receiving of this Holy Sacrament.

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*What Self-Resignation is, and wherein it consists. What makes it Necessary. Upon what account it comes to be a Duty, preparatory to the Holy Sacrament. God likens himself to a Potter; and why. Our Perfection proved to consist in this Self-Resignation.*

**I. W**HAT this Self-Resignation is, and wherein it consists, is no hard matter to guess. 'Tis, in short, to resign our Will to God's Will, not only in being ready to do what God would have us do; but, in being contented to suffer whatever he shall think fit to lay upon us. 'Tis St. *Anselm's* Observation, That God alone, who is the Creator of all things, can will and do what he pleases, having no Will superior to his own, to which we ought to submit: But when Man will do his own Will, he robs Almighty God, in some measure, of his Crown; for as the Crown is only the Privilege and Prerogative of a King, so to do what he pleases is God's only Property: And, as a Subject that should fly at the Crown of his Prince, and take it

it off his Head, would commit Treason, and do his Sovereign the greatest Injury; to a Man that will have his own Will, attributes that to himself, which is a Privilege appertaining only to Divinity it self.

And, indeed, this Self-Resignation is nothing but an effect of sincere and cordial Love: Love being the Bond that ties or unites the Person loving to him that is loved, as Hatred dissolves and unties that Bond. This Love consists chiefly in the Will; and if it be right, it must necessarily oblige him that loves God, to will what he wills, and take his Pleasure and Will for his Rule, whereby he governs his own Desires and Affections.

II. That which makes this Self-Resignation to the Will of God very necessary, are these important Points.

I. Hereby the Glory of God is signally advanc'd: It is the most excellent Sacrifice we can offer to Almighty God. The Glory of God consists in having his Will fulfilled: And since we are both created and redeemed to advance God's Glory, we commit a very great Error in having a different Will from God's Will; for we deprive him of the Honour due to him, and which we are obliged to advance not only by our Obedience, but by our Troubles and Dangers too. And if it be such an Advancement of God's Glory to do what he will have us do, and to follow him where he leads, it can be no less Glory to our selves, to have the Honour to fulfil his Will in all things. That God, who is far above us, so infinitely exalted above our frail Natures, should make use of such poor miserable Creatures, to glorifie him; and employ, in the compassing of his admirable Designs, such vile Worms, when he might make use of far better, is no small Dignity and Advancement. If a King were to give Battel to a fierce and numerous Enemy, and should quit or lay by a bright and two-edged Sword, and take a rusty



rusty Dagger with no Point or Edge, to fight the opposite Army; as it would be a Mark of his greater Courage, so the Victory he gains by that means, would be more renowned and glorious. We are in the Hand of God, no otherwise than obtuse and blunt Daggers are; and that by such contemptible means he will compass his Glory, is not only the way to promote his own Honour, but ours too. When the Disciples of *Socrates* had all made their Masters very noble Presents, *Aschines*, who was very poor, came to him, and told him, Sir, I have nothing to give you, that is worthy of you; and therefore, take the only thing I have to give you; that is my self. *Socrates* was extreamly pleas'd with this Offer. And *Seneca* adds, that by this present, *Aschines* exceeded all the rich Gifts, not only of *Alcibiades*, whose Gifts were equal to his generous Mind, but all the Presents of the rest. A Man can give nothing to God, that is more pleasing to him, than his Will; and in giving him his Will, he gives him all his Content, his Love, his Honour, his Health, and his Wealth; for he leaves all these to his Disposal.

2. Nothing comes to pass without God's Providence. Our Sickneses, Poverty, Exile, Losses, Crosses, Troubles, Accidents, which foolish Men are apt to ascribe to Chance, are all govern'd by his Almighty Hand, and sent by his Order: So that, not to conform our Wills to his Will in these Cases, is a tacit denial of his Providence. Nay, though the Afflictions and Miseries which may befall us, may be inflicted by wicked Instruments, the Devil and evil Men; yet, as God hath no Hand in their Sins, so he hath certainly a hand in the Affliction. And this is one great design of the Holy Ghost, in Scripture, to direct us how to refer all things, even the most displeasing, and the most disagreeable to Flesh and Blood, to God's Providence. *Job* therefore, though the *Chaldeans*, and the Devil were the external

external Instruments, whereby his Calamities were sent upon him, yet he acknowledges God in all ; and, in his Confession, ascribes his Losses, not to the Devil, not to the *Chaldeans*, but to God ; *The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away ; Blessed be the Name of the Lord, Job 1. 21.* It was therefore a very wise Answer which *Lupus*, the Bishop of *Troy*, gave to *Attila*, the King of the *Huns*, who with an Army of Five Hundred Thousand Men, had burnt and destroyed, and laid waste abundance of Countries : Coming at last before *Troy*, the Bishop and his Clergy in their Robes, went out to meet him ; and as they came into his Presence, the Bishop craved leave to ask him, who he was ? *Attila* with a fierce and stern Countenance told him, *I am the Scourge of God. Are you so, saith the Bishop ? Who then is able to resist you ? And since you are so, pray come, and beat and scourge us as you think fit, and as God shall permit you.* An Answer which *Attila* was so well pleased with, that he spared the Town, and passed through it, without doing the Inhabitants the least hurt. This good Man saw the Providence of God in it, and conformed his will to God's Will ; and thereby teaches us, that this Self-resignation is the way to see an happy Issue of our Afflictions.

3. As nothing comes to pass without a special Providence, so whatsoever befalls us is govern'd by infinite Wisdom, and comes upon us for wise and holy Ends, though for the present we cannot see to the bottom of them ; and that is a very great Motive to this Self-resignation. As the whole World is govern'd by the infinite Wisdom of God, so Man in a particular manner, and more especially those that fear him ; and whether God commands any thing, or will have us suffer any thing, it is still for the noblest Ends, even his Glory, and our own Eternal Salvation. And, to say the Truth, a Man can give no better, no greater Demonstration of his Wisdom,

Wisdom, than in denying his own Judgment and Will, and submitting them to the Wisdom of God: For, take the greatest and most exact Wisdom that is in Man, or ever hath been, even the Wisdom of *Solomon*, if it be compared with the Wisdom of God, it is meer Darkness and Ignorance; so that, to resign our selves to the Wisdom and Will of God in all things, must be the greatest Wisdom. If a Man that is born Blind, should refuse to take a wise Guide with him, and particularly his own Father, who entirely loves him, a prudent Man, and who knows the way perfectly; all would take him for a Mad-man, and blind in Soul, as well as Body. And how are we better than such a Man, if we are afraid to follow our Heavenly Father, even then when he leads us over Rocks and Precipices? For we have reason to trust the Hand that guides us, whatever Reasons offer themselves to our Minds to the contrary, nor can we be deceiv'd in our Trust, for he that guides us, is infinitely Wise. The Wisdom of God is to be seen in Inequalities, as much as in any thing: A Body would not be beautiful, if all the Parts were of an equal bigness; some parts standing out, and others being depressed, some being big, and others little, make up the Beauty of the whole; as in the Fabrick of the Earth, Mountains, and Hills, and Dales, Rocks, and fruitful Fields being mingled one with another, make the Fabrick more stately than otherwise it would be: The same may be said of our Lives, which being chequered with Adversity and Prosperity, with Light and Darkness, with good Report and evil Report, declare at once their Beauty and God's Wisdom, so that we may confidently affirm, That the Sovereign Reason, which is God, can do nothing contrary to Reason, in things that concern us, even then, when sometimes they seem to be contrary; so that this makes Self-resignation a necessary Duty.

III. But



III. But here a Question will arise, Why this Duty of Self-resignation is to be exercised and practised, particularly before we receive the Holy Sacrament of the *Eucharist*; and how comes this to be a Preparative for this Ordinance, and the worthy Receiving of it? To which I answer as follows.

I. This is to imitate our Blessed Saviour, who, before he went to die, resigned his Will to his Holy Father's Will, *Luke 22. 42.* *Father, if thou be willing, remove this Cup from me; nevertheless, not my Will, but thine, be done:* And what more proper, than before we remember this Death to use the same Self-resignation? To imitate him in all his Actions, except the Miraculous, is our Duty and Glory. We cannot imitate a better Pattern; Nay, the design of the Gospel is to plant in us a conformity to his Temper, and to oblige us to tread in his Steps. If we do not, it's as much as our Lives are worth, and he will not own us for his Disciples. The very name *Christian*, imports so much; and as a *Pythagorean* is one, that believes, and lives as *Pythagoras* lived; so a *Christian* is he, that believes, and lives as *Christ* did live; and therefore, *learn of me*, *Matth. 11. 26.* contains the whole Duty of a Christian. Of this, the late famous *Antonette Baurignon* (if it be true, what is said in the History of her Life) had very early apprehensions: For when she was but a Girl of Four years of Age, having heard of her Parents and Friends what *Christ* had taught, and how he lived, and that by him we must enter into Eternal Life, she was exceedingly desirous to go into the Country, where Men lived as *Christ* had taught them, and as he lived. Her Friends telling her, that she lived in a Christian Country, and that all that were about her were Christians; she shook her Head, professing that she could not believe them, for those she saw lived not as *Christ* had taught them, or as he lived, but rather

rather directly contrary; For Christ (saith she) was voluntarily poor, and we love Gold and Silver; he was humble and lowly, but we affect Dominion and Greatness; he was always in Affliction, we Hunt for Carnal Pleasures. The wisest Person living could not have spoken greater sense; and if Christ's Actions were intended for Patterns, it will naturally follow that as he entirely resign'd himself to his Father's Will, before he went to die, so, it's very fit that his Disciples, when they come to remember his Death in a most solemn manner in the Sacrament, should follow him in that Self-resignation, the rather, because, like him, we resolve in this Sacrament, and promise for the Glory set before us, to run with Patience the Race which is set before us, for which, this Self-resignation is absolutely necessary as will appear more fully from the following Paragraph.

2. Without this Self-resignation, one great End for which we pretend to come to this Sacrament, is not to be obtain'd, which is, to learn to imitate Christ Jesus in his Patience under all sorts of Sufferings, which can never be done without a holy Self-resignation. He that doth not resign his Will to God's Will in all things, must necessarily fall into discontent, when any trouble doth surprize him, especially if it be of the greater sort; for he will either look altogether upon the second Causes, whereby his Misery comes, which will make him quarrel, with the Dog, at the Stone thrown at him; or he will imagine, that he might have prevented it, and that it was nothing but his own carelessness and imprudence that caused it, and that will make him fret and fume; or he will fancy, that he hath not deserved such an Affliction, and that will make him repine; or he will compare his present afflicted State with the more happy condition of his Neighbours, and that will occasion great Murmurings and Complaints; or he will do little, but pore up-

on his wretchedness, and that will fill him with melancholy Thoughts; or he will measure his Felicity by worldly Prosperity, and that will unavoidably bring the Sorrow of the World upon him; but a Person that hath resign'd his Will to the Will of God, can think nothing strange: This *one thing*, that his Affliction is the Will of God, will hush and quiet all, compose his Thoughts, lenifie the bitterness and grievousness of his Wounds, lessen his Grief, cause chearfulness in his Soul, fortifie his Mind, and make him say with *David*, *I was dumb, I open'd not my Mouth, because thou didst it*, Psal. 39. 9. Not to mention the Sweetness our Souls would taste, and be sensible of, in this Holy Sacrament, if they came with this Self-resignation to the Will of God; for this would be a preparative for greater Gifts, for larger Effusions of the Holy Ghost, and richer Communications of inward Comforts.

*The Preceding Considerations reduced to Practice.*

**G**OD, *Jer.* 18. 2. doth very fitly compare himself to a Potter, who, by the motion of his Wheel, and the activity of his Hand, gives the Clay what Form and Shape he pleases; and the reason, why he makes use of that Similitude, is, because himself formed Man of the Clay of the Earth; and from hence it's very easie to infer, that if we suffer'd our selves to be managed by his powerful Hand, as easily, as the Clay doth by the Potters, we might become most beautiful Vessels. Nothing in Nature resists the Will of God. The Heavens readily conform to his Pleasure, and all the Stars move and shine by his Order and Appointment; the whole Creation doth exactly and punctually submit to his Law, and Night and Day do not make a false Step, in obeying the Constitutions of the great Architect; if they should, what confusion would



would the whole Universe fall into? So our Will, if it suffer it self to be entirely govern'd by the Divine, every Member, and every part in this little World, *Man*, wou'd move in excellent harmony; their Motions wou'd be circular and orderly; for nothing causes greater confusion in the Frame, than when we are loth to leave our selves to his Conduct. This is the way to arm our selves against all danger. This abates their force, and enfeebles their violence when they come. This checks our needless Curiosity; and while we enquire for what reasons God sends such things upon us, *this one* answers all Objections; *It is the Will of God.*

II. We see here by what Standard we are to measure Christian Perfection, even by this Self-resignation of our Wills to God's Will. The more we advance in this, the more perfect we are; and though an absolute Perfection is not to be obtained in this Life, yet to come as near that absolute Conformity and Self-resignation, which shall be in Heaven, as we can, is counted Christian Perfection, even on this side Heaven. It was therefore wisely said by *Alphonso*, King of *Arragon*, when one of his Familiars ask'd him, Who it was, that he counted the happiest Man? His Answer was; *Him who receives all things, whether sad or pleasant, as coming from a kind and wise Father's hand, with an even Mind.* And we are told of a Man, that had the Power of Miracles conferr'd upon him, and being ask'd of his Friend, How he came by that Power? He said, he knew not, except God should like one thing in him, which was, that he was never lifted up by Prosperity, nor cast down by Adversity, and whatever happen'd to him, still he look'd higher, to the Origin and Spring from whence it came, and that every day he made it his business, to desire nothing but what God desires, and all his Prayers tended that

way, that God's Will might be entirely fulfilled and accomplished in him. Even the *Heathen Philosophers* placed Perfection in following God, *i. e.* in a cheerful submission to every thing that God would have done; and therefore, we have a notable address of the *Heathen Epictetus* to his great Creator, an Address fit to be imitated by every Christian.

Great God, (saith he) use me henceforward  
*Avian Epist.* according to thy pleasure. I am altogether  
 l. 2. c. 16. of thy Mind. It is indifferent to me, how  
 thou dealest with me. I refuse nothing, if thou seeest it  
 good for me. Lead me where thou thinkest it convenient.  
 Cloath me in what Garment thou pleatest, whether it be  
 whole or torn, either shall be welcome: Whether thou  
 wilt have me bear the Office of a Magistrate, or lead a  
 private Life; whether thou wilt have me stay in mine  
 own Country, or let me be driven into Exile; whether  
 thou wilt have me rich or poor; In all this, by my equa-  
 nimity, I will justifie thee before Men. This Prayer  
 from the Mouth of an Heathen, is astonishing; and  
 the rather, because we see few Christians arrive to  
 this Self-resignation, that have far greater helps;  
 and had we no express Command for this Self-  
 resignation in the Bible, yet that general Precept,  
 of considering and doing whatever things are true,  
 and just, and honest, and lovely, and of a good  
 report, would oblige us to imitate the very Hea-  
 then Philosophers, in so lovely and reasonable a  
 Duty. But we need not have recourse to this ge-  
 neral hint, the express Precepts and Examples,  
 that tend to the enforcement of this admirable qua-  
 lification, are so many, that there is no room left  
 for Excuses and Evasions. Whether the Story of  
 the Lady of *Soncino* be true, I know not, but the  
 Moral intended by it, is agreeable enough to the  
 Word of God. The Story saith, That being, in a  
 Vision, carried up to view the various Mansions of  
 Glory, She saw some Holy Souls mingled with the  
 Quire

Quire of *Seraphims*, and the highest Order of Angels ; and demanding who they were, answer was made her, That they were Persons, who here on Earth did entirely resign their Wills to the Will of God : A thing so rational, that in omitting it, we condemn our selves ; for the sick Man leaves himself entirely to the conduct of his Physician ; an oppressed Person to the Wisdom and Discretion of his Advocate ; and the Blind to the guidance of his Dog ; and therefore, it must be a strange obstinacy, not to resign our selves to the Conduct of a most wise God ; who orders our Affairs far better, and with far greater advantage to us, than we do, or can do our selves. The more tractable any Instrument is, the more perfect it is : If a Painter were to draw the Picture of an Emperor, and the Pencil in his Hand should resist the motions of his Fingers, make no Strokes, and be dull to any Impressions, form no Line, and cast no Colour, or should warp, and flinch to the left hand, when he would direct it to the right, it would be worth nothing, for its greatest Perfection lies in yielding to the hand that manages it, and in expressing all the Strokes the Workman doth intend to make. We are Instruments in the Hand of God, which he hath made on purpose to serve him in the promoting of his Glory, and therefore are obliged to suffer our selves to be handled by him, and to leave our selves entirely to his Power to turn and wind us, and to employ us in such things as he thinks convenient, without any resistance. The natural desire of Mankind, is, to arrive to Peace and Rest, but the generality take very preposterous ways to obtain it, when they involve themselves in a Thousand anxious Cares and Troubles, which, instead of conducting them to that end, drive them farther and farther off ; whence it comes to pass, that though they desire it, yet their desires are never accomplished. But this Self-

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resignation



resignation to the Will of God, is the proper means; and he that lets his own Will die, and makes God's Will to live in him, comes safely to the City of Peace and Rest. All our Inquietude rises from our resisting the Will of God; from hence flow all the Tempests that molest us; and while we are loth to do what God would have us do, and unwilling to suffer what he will have us suffer, it cannot be otherwise, but that Peace must be a Stranger to our Breasts. Whatever happens in the World, is nothing but the accomplishment of God's Designs; and the Soul that would always have that done that God would have done, can wonder at nothing that happens to her, for it is her Will as well as God's Will. However, if we are loth to resign our selves to his Will, we have reason to fear his Anger; and if we resist his Will, or are unwilling to submit to it, he will do his Will upon us, whether we will or no. If we chearfully submit, he will treat us as his Children; if not, he will use us as his Slaves: And therefore the Advice of *Eliphaz*, *Job*. 22. 21, 22. is the safest Rule we can follow. *Acquaint now thy self with him, and be at peace, thereby good shall come unto thee. Receive, I pray thee, the Law from his Mouth, and lay up his Words in thy Heart. If thou return to the Almighty, thou shalt be built up, thou shalt put Iniquity far from thy Tabernacle; yea, the Almighty shall be thy defence, and thou shalt have plenty of Silver, i. e. as much content as if thou hadst plenty of Silver, for then shalt thou have thy delight in the Almighty, and shalt lift up thy Face to God. Thou shalt make thy Prayer unto him, and he shall hear thee, and thou shalt pay thy Vows; thou shalt also decree a thing, and it shall be establish'd unto thee, and the light shall shine upon thy ways.*

*The PRAYER.*

**O** MY God, my Lord, my Saviour, God of infinite Power, who dost not only govern thy Creatures by thy Greatness, but by thy Goodness, who canst do no wrong, and hast used me in particular with that respect and tenderness, even in the midst of all the Afflictions that have come upon me, that thou hast been more a Father to me than a Judge, and hast rather embraced me than corrected me. Behold! I am going to remember what my dearest Lord hath done for my miserable Soul on the Cross; and as I am going to remember the unspeakable Blessings he hath purchased for me, so I desire to remember my Duty of imitating him in his Self-resignation to thy Divine and Incomprehensible Will. And here, Lord, I humbly consecrate my Will to thine, I prescribe thee no Rules, no Methods how to govern me, but leave my self entirely to be disposed of according to thy Will, which way soever thou shalt think fit to lead me to Heaven and eternal Happiness, whether by Hunger or Thirst, or Poverty, or Infamy, or the Rage and Envy of Men, or by other Miseries; whether by Sicknes, or by Health; whether by Losses, or Unkindness of Friends; whether it be through good report, or evil report; whether thou wilt have me live or die; whether thou wilt have me die this Year or the next, or Ten Years hence; whether my

Death shall be sudden or slow ; whether natural, or violent ; whether honourable, or dishonourable ; whether upon my Bed, or in a Wood ; whether in Fire, or Water ; I am resign'd, and content to go where thou biddest me, and to endure what in thy Wisdom thou shalt think fit for me. Thy Commands are reasonable. In Wisdom thou hast made them all. I take exception at none. I embrace them all. They are the Light of mine Eyes, and while they be my Guides, I cannot go astray. Thy Providences also are the effect of eternal Wisdom. Nothing happens by chance, Thou rulest all Events. Thou governest all the World. Whatever befalls me, is either decreed or permitted by thee, and when thou dost permit things, thou permittest them for weighty and pregnant Reasons. Give me an Heart devoted to thy Fear. Let me neither murmur at thy Laws, nor repine at thy Dispensations. Let every thing be welcome and pleasing to me, which thou knowest to be for my Good. Let me not judge of things by outward appearances, but by thy Will and unsearchable Wisdom. Give me Wisdom out of thine own Store ; Wisdom, which may resemble thine, and agree with thine. And then I shall be wise indeed, when I shall learn to submit my self to thy infinite Wisdom, then shall I know thee, the only true God, and him whom thou hast sent, *Jesus Christ* ; to whom, with thee, O Father, and the Holy Ghost, be all Honour and Glory, for ever and ever, *Amen.*





## CHAP. XXVI.

Of Preparatory Devotions and Aspirations, fit to be used in Private, before we come to the Holy Sacrament.

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### The CONTENTS.

*The conveniency of using Devotions suitable to this Holy Sacrament, the Week before we receive. Prayers and Aspirations relating to the Afflictions of Christ, to Christ's readiness to comfort Persons diseased, and in distress; to his Praying for his Disciples, and those that should believe in his Name, &c.*

**T**Hough all the preceding Prayers are nothing but preparatory Devotions, and may be used as such, yet, for varieties sake, which may be as delightful in Spiritual, as it is in Temporal things, I shall add some other Aspirations and Breathings of the Soul after God in this Chapter, as Preparatives for the worthy receiving of the Holy Communion. Extraordinary Occasions, as I have said often, and short Warnings, when a Friend or Neighbour is indisposed, and requires our presence and help, and joyning with him in the devout use of this Ordinance, may oblige us to alter our method; but where no considerable Impediment straitens us in time, it will be convenient, the Week before we receive, besides our standing Devotions,

to

to address our selves to God in Supplications, as both relate, and are subservient to the great Works we intend for: And such are the following Aspirations, whereof one or two may be used together with our daily Devotion.

## I.

‘ O wonderful Saviour! What Afflictions hast thou suffered for me! Heat and Cold, Hunger and Thirst, Labour and Miseries! Give me an Heart to receive from thy hands chearfully all kind of Adversity! Give me that excellent Temper, which was in thy Apostles, whereby they rejoyced in Tribulation, and counted it honourable and glorious, that they had any thing to lose for thy sake! I intend to look upon thy Sufferings in the Blessed Sacrament! O let the sight work upon me, that I may be contented to suffer joyfully for thy sake!

## II.

‘ Great Prince of Peace! Who in thy Converse with Men, tookest all opportunities to comfort the distressed, and didst most mercifully cure their Diseases! Give me a great sense of the Afflictions of my Neighbours, that I may have as great a feeling of their Miseries, as if they were mine own, and be ready to help them according to my ability! I am going to behold in the Blessed Sacrament, what Miracles thou hast wrought for me, O let me not come away from thence, without working a Miracle upon my Soul!

## III.

‘ Great Counsellor of my Soul! Who, at thy leaving the World, didst in Prayer recommend thy Disciples, and those that, thro’ their means, should believe in thy Name, to the Heavenly Father’s Care! Let me find the Benefit of thy Intercession! Preserve me from this evil World, and keep me by thy Truth. Take care of my Soul,  
that

that I may not be lost in the Wilderness of this World! In the Holy Sacrament, which I mean to be Partaker of, assure me of that care, and that thou wilt not leave me, nor forsake me.

IV.

O thou who art *Alpha* and *Omega*, the Beginning and the End! Who didst suffer thy self to be laid hold of, by the Sacrilegious Hands of thy furious Enemies, and when they bound thee, didst not revenge their Injuries, but spake mildly to them! Give me Grace to shew my self loving and mild to all my Enemies, to pardon them from my Heart, and to look upon them as Ministers of thy Will, and promoters of my Salvation. To this end, let the Holy Sacrament I intend to take, strengthen my Soul, that I may become conformable to thee, in doing good to them that hate me!

V.

O Thou who art a Priest for ever after the Order of *Melchisedeck*, who didst seek me when I was a Stranger to thee, and calledst me when I knew thee not! Now I know thee, let nothing satisfy me but thy self. Give me a flaming Heart, a chearful Mind, and an enlighten'd Understanding! O give me thy self, for nothing less will content my weary Soul! I will seek thee in the Holy Sacrament, O let me find thee, and say to me, *In the day of Salvation have I succour'd thee!*

VI.

O my compassionate Saviour! whose Bowels yearn over the Penitent! My Soul is miserable, if it loves thee not, or if it continues to love the World! O let my Soul rest in thee, and contemplate thee, and shew forth thy Praises, and be thou my Song in the House of my Pilgrimage! O thou, who art rich in Goodness! Redeem this poor Captive; give meat to my hungry Soul, even the

Meat



‘ Meat which came down from Heaven! In the  
 ‘ Holy Sacrament let me find it, that I may live  
 ‘ and not die!

## VII.

‘ O thou, who art the only Life of my Soul! I  
 ‘ invite thee to my House! I confess, a shatter’d, a  
 ‘ broken, and ruinous House! But be thou entrea-  
 ‘ ted to rebuild and beautify it with thy Salvation!  
 ‘ Set up thy Kingdom in it, and make my Flesh  
 ‘ obedient to my Soul, my Soul to Reason, my  
 ‘ Reason to Faith, my Faith to thy Will. Enlarge  
 ‘ my Mind, loose me from my Bonds, and let the  
 ‘ effects of my coming to the Holy Sacrament, be  
 ‘ that I may become a Servant of Righteousness,  
 ‘ and may relish no Wisdom, but what is from  
 ‘ above.

## VIII.

‘ O my Redeemer! kind, unspeakably kind, to  
 ‘ poor Sinners! I am going to remember the great  
 ‘ Mystery of thy Death and Passion! Establish my  
 ‘ mind with the sweetness of thy Presence! Let  
 ‘ my Soul feel that thou enterest into her, and re-  
 ‘ joyce before thee. O sacred Fire, which always  
 ‘ burnest! O Love, which always shinest! shine  
 ‘ in my Soul, and sanctify that Vessel. Empty it  
 ‘ of Vanity, fill it with thy Grace, and keep it full,  
 ‘ till it be made worthy to receive the fulness of  
 ‘ Joy at thy Right-hand for evermore!

## IX.

‘ O powerful Mediator! Thy Love is sweeter  
 ‘ than Honey! more nourishing than Milk! Rule  
 ‘ my Soul, direct my Understanding, animate my  
 ‘ Love, attract my Heart, and let it thirst after the  
 ‘ Rivers of thy Pleasures! Appease the Tumults of  
 ‘ my Flesh, hush the Noise of my worldly Affe-  
 ‘ ctions, and let my participation of thy Love in  
 ‘ the Blessed Sacrament give me confidence, that  
 ‘ where

‘where my Head and Master Reigns and Lives,  
‘there shall I Reign and Live for ever

X.

‘Great lover of Mankind! To love thee is a  
‘great thing! Even so to love thee, as to think of  
‘thee with delight, to relish nothing like thee,  
‘and to be conformable to thy Will. O let this  
‘Love dwell in me! Let this Love captivate my  
‘Soul! By this Love let me be united to thee!  
‘Let this good Angel visit me! In the Holy Sa-  
‘crament, let this Love be settled in me, that  
‘my angry, turbulent, covetous, mistrustful and  
‘impatient Thoughts may cease, and I may feel  
‘that Calm which those that do entirely love  
‘thee, feel!

XI.

‘O Saviour! Gentle as the Spirit, that in the  
‘shape of a Dove lighted on thy sacred Head!  
‘Teach me that Meekness which look’d so amia-  
‘ble in thy Life! Expel the Evil Spirits of Wrath,  
‘Anger, and Pride, and Envy, out of my Soul!  
‘Speak the Word, and these Winds and Waves  
‘will obey thee. Let thy gentleness make me  
‘great. When I shall have overcome my wrath-  
‘ful and proud Inclinations, (and O! let the Sa-  
‘crament I am going to, help me in the Con-  
‘quest) then shall I be great and glorious in thy  
‘fight!

XII.

‘Great Shepherd of my Soul! whose Wounds  
‘are full of Sweetness, full of Mercy, full of Cha-  
‘rity! Let thy Wounds prove the most powerful  
‘Remedies to rid me of my Corruptions! When  
‘any impure Thoughts rise in me, let thinking of  
‘thy Wounds crush them; when sluggishness in  
‘Religion assaults me, let thy Wounds, and the  
‘remembrance of them, make me vigilant in thy  
‘Service, and when in the Holy Sacrament, I  
‘think

think of thy Wounds, let all my vain Imaginations expire!

## XIII.

Great Friend of my immortal Soul! Such a Friend is not to be found in all the World, as thou hast been to me, for thou hast laid down thy Life for me; O let me make much of thy Friendship and cherish it, by being meek, and humble, and merciful, and patient, as thou wert, that thou mayest be my Friend when I die, and, after Death, receive me to thy self. O, confirm and seal thy Friendship to my Soul in the Blessed Sacrament, and let the same Spirit move in me, which raised me from the Dead!

## XIV.

O Thou, who hast wash'd me from my Sins with thine own Blood, chuse, I beseech thee, my Heart for thy Dwelling-place, adorn and replenish it with thy Gifts and Graces, make me to loath all transitory things, make me poor in Spirit, cure in me the itch of Self-love, throw down all Pride and eagerness after the Riches of this World, and make the Holy Sacrament I am going to, a means to adore thee in Spirit, and in Truth, and to persevere in Goodness to the end.

## XV.

Great Comforter of all weary and laden Souls; Circumcise my Heart from all evil Thoughts, and Words, and Actions, and communicate thy self unto me, that I may never be separated from thee, or ever be deprived of thy Comfort! Draw my Soul after thee in the Holy Sacrament, and let thy Blessed Ordinance powerfully stir up my Heart to love thee!

## XVI.

O Thou, who art the Door of thy Sheepfold! By thee let me have access to thy Father's Love! And as, in the Holy Sacrament, thou openest thy Bosom



‘ Bosom to me, so let me run, and seek shelter  
‘ there! Chain me to thy self by Bands of Love;  
‘ and let no Temptation defile me. O keep me,  
‘ that I may never cowardly faint at any Adversity!

XVII.

‘ Thou who hast endured Contradictions of Sin-  
‘ ners against thy self! Be thou ever in my Mind,  
‘ and teach me to bear Calumnies and Reproaches  
‘ with great tranquility of Mind: Let me refer all  
‘ Difficulties to thee, and with silence expect thy  
‘ Grace and Comfort; and let the Blessed Sacra-  
‘ ment so influence my Soul, that I may fear none  
‘ but thee!

XVIII.

‘ Great Captain of my Salvation! I am going to  
‘ learn to fight the good Fight in the Blessed Sacra-  
‘ ment of thy Love! Let thy great Example there  
‘ encourage me to fight against all Ambition, and  
‘ Ostentation, against Censoriousness and Uncha-  
‘ ritableness, against all Intemperance and Glutto-  
‘ ny, against all proud and covetous Thoughts,  
‘ against Guile and Hypocrisie, against Disconten-  
‘ tedness and mistrust of thy Providence. Against  
‘ such Enemies give me Grace to fight; over these  
‘ let me triumph, that, having striven lawfully, I  
‘ may at last be admitted to the glorious fight of  
‘ thy sweet Self, and be charm’d with thy Love for  
‘ ever.

CHAP.



## CHAP. XXVII.

### Of the proper Acts of Devotion, when we come to the Holy Table.

#### The CONTENTS.

*Private Acts of Devotion must be forborn, while the Congregation joyns in common Addressses to Almighty God. General Acts of Devotion, relating to the wonderful Love of Christ, and our Love to him. Particular Acts of Devotion at the Consecration and Receiving of the Holy Symbols.*

**I.** THE following Acts are fittest to be used before the Prayers of the Church, usual at the Communion, do begin, or before the Minister of the Ordinance comes to us with the sacred Symbols, and while others are communicating.

**II.** While the Minister of the Ordinance is engag'd in the Prayers of the Church, these Ejaculations must be forborn; our Duty, during the publick Devotions, being to joyn with the Congregation in their common Addressses to God. These Acts of Devotion are either General, or Particular. The General, I call those which respect the Love of the Lord Jesus. The Particular, those which are to be exercis'd at the Consecration and Receiving of the Consecrated Bread and Wine.

*General*

*General Acts of Devotion at the Lord's Table.*

Great Saviour of the World! Thou art infinitely amiable; worthy to be loved by all, to whose Ears the joyful Message of thy Love doth come. I rejoyce in the Knowledge of thy Love. I count my self happy that am born under the Shadow of thy Gospel, in which thy wonderful Love to the Children of Men is manifested! I desire no other Knowledge: 'Tis enough that I know thou hast loved me beyond Example. I desire to count all things Dross and Dung, for the Excellency of the Knowledge of Christ.

II.

O my Jesus! I am not worthy to love thee! Yet, because thou biddest me love thee, and hast told me, that my Soul was created on purpose to love thee, I chearfully resign my Love and Affection to thee! I desire to love thee! I wish for nothing more, than that I may passionately love thee! Whom have I in Heaven to love, but thee? And there is none on Earth that I desire to love more than thy self: For thou art altogether lovely, and thy Love surpasses all the Love of Friends, and the dearest Relations I have.

III.

O my blessed Redeemer! I desire to love thee with all my Heart, and with all my Strength: Thou gavest me this Heart, and this Strength; And on whom can I bestow it better, than on thee, the Author of it? Oh, that all that is within me might be turned into Desires and Inclinations, and Sighs, and Languishings, and Breathings after thee! For I cannot express what thou hast done for me. What thou hast done for me, is beyond all the Kindness that the greatest Men ever did, or can do, for the meanest and poorest Creatures!



## IV.

Great Advocate of my Soul! Thou see'st my desire to love thee! Make it strong and powerful! Take a Coal from the Altar, and give it Fire, that nothing may hinder the Flame from mounting up, that nothing may weaken this Desire, nothing may break it, nothing may tire it, nothing may mingle with it that is unclean, or contrary to thy Love!

## V.

Great Object of my Desires! Make me a Martyr of thy Love! Make me willing even to die for love of thee! Raise a mighty Hunger and Thirst after thy Love in my Soul! Such an Hunger and Thirst, that I may be unsatisfied with any thing, but thy Love! Let thy Love work upon me with that efficacy, that I may think my self afflicted, and poor, and miserable, till I love thee fervently!

## VI.

Blessed Jesus! Who would not love thee! Who would not wish to be enamour'd with such Charity as thine is, to the Sons and Daughters of Men! If we love thee not, it is because we do not know the Vehemency and Power of thy Love. Had we a clear sight of it, our Souls would run after thee, and nothing could stop them from clinging to so amiable an Object. Lord, give me that lively View of thy Love, that nothing may charm me more than thy Love!

## VII.

Great King of Saints, pity me! I would love thee, but thou see'st what Impediments come between thy Love, and my blockish Heart! Innumerable Temptations, my perverse Will, my Self-love, my Passions, and my other Imperfections! Oh, how these hinder me from loving thee! O my gracious Master! Let me detest and abhor all these Enemies, that would hinder me from loving thee!

‘ thee ! Stretch forth thy mighty Arm, and destroy  
‘ these Foes, that I may entirely love thee.

VIII.

‘ O *Jesu* ! Thou art all Love, all Goodness, all  
‘ Charity ! And Oh, what Opposition do I find in  
‘ my self to love thee ! O Love Divine ! Where is  
‘ thy Strength, thy Force, and thy uncontrollable  
‘ Power ! O my Lord ! Why dost not thou shew  
‘ it ? Why dost not thou exert it for my Help ?  
‘ Why do not thy Celestial Flames consume in me  
‘ all that is contrary to thy Love ? Oh ! When wilt  
‘ thou establish the Life of Love, even that Divine  
‘ Life, in my Soul !

IX.

‘ O Omnipotent Love ! I leave my self to thy  
‘ Management. Enter, enter into this frozen  
‘ Heart, and erect thy Kingdom, and thy Empire  
‘ there. Undo what thou pleasest, and build up  
‘ what thou pleasest. Let every Desire of my Soul  
‘ become Subject to thee. Subdue every Imagina-  
‘ tion that would refuse to be at thy Command :  
‘ And make me willing to submit to any thing, so  
‘ I may but love thee.

X.

‘ Most lovely Saviour ! Shall any thing hinder  
‘ me from loving thee ? Shall my Body ? I will sub-  
‘ due that Beast. Shall my Sins ? I will drown  
‘ them in thy Blood. Shall the World ? Or the  
‘ Creatures here below ? No, no ; I will renounce  
‘ my Love to them, I will despise them all : They  
‘ have too long excommunicated thee from my  
‘ Soul. I will make no more Account of my Praises,  
‘ of my Pleasures, of my Vanities. I will look up-  
‘ on them all as Dreams, and Smoak ; and I will  
‘ hate them, as much as they have hated thee, Great  
‘ Center of my Soul !

## XI.

' Great Sovereign of my Love ! Thou hast sent  
 ' me into the World, on purpose to love thee !  
 ' What a noble, what an excellent, what an holy  
 ' End is this ? Think of the Honour, think of the  
 ' Favour, think of the Dignity, O my Soul, that  
 ' God hath laid upon thee ! That he that could have  
 ' eternally enjoy'd himself in his own Love, should  
 ' speak a Creature into Being, and ordain that  
 ' Creature to love him ! Oh, how happy am I, that  
 ' God hath given me an Heart to love him ! O my  
 ' *Jesu* ! Let me die a Thousand Deaths, rather than  
 ' lose thy Love.

## XII.

' O Love Divine ! Be thou the Life of my Life,  
 ' the Soul of my Soul, the Spirit of my Spirit ! Let  
 ' me think of thy Love, and speak of thy Love, and  
 ' do Acts worthy of thy Love, and let all my Con-  
 ' versation savour of the Love of *Jesus*. Whatever  
 ' I do, let me do it for thy sake. Let thy Love put  
 ' me upon Acts of Charity ; and let every Virtue  
 ' I exercise, be the product of thy Love.

## XIII.

' O *Jesu* ! Thou art my all ! All other things are  
 ' nothing, in comparison of thee ! And I would  
 ' love nothing, but in thee, and for thee ! I would  
 ' see thee in all things, and love thee in every thing  
 ' I do ! Thou art my greatest Friend, my only  
 ' Friend. Thou art my Brother, my Father, my  
 ' Husband, and my Chief. Thou art All in All to  
 ' me : And Oh, that my All might be consecrated  
 ' to thy Service !

## XIV.

' My dearest Saviour ! There is nothing in Hea-  
 ' ven, or in Earth, so worthy to be loved, as thou.  
 ' Oh, how amiable art thou ! Yet the World doth  
 ' not so much as think of thee : They think of no-  
 ' thing but offending thee. They hope to be saved  
 ' by



‘ by thee, and yet do what they can to dishonour  
‘ thee ! Let this very Consideration inflame my Love  
‘ to thee ! Oh, that I could love thee, as the whole  
‘ World ought to love thee !

XV.

‘ Great Son of God ! I was bound to love thee  
‘ as soon as I came to the use of my Reasons : Yet  
‘ how long hath it been, before I thought of loving  
‘ thee ! O my Lord, how late do I begin to love  
‘ thee ! How long have I hated thee ! How many  
‘ Years together have I despised thy Love ! When I  
‘ think of this, I have reason to wish for a Sea of  
‘ Tears ; nay for Tears of Blood, to wash away  
‘ my monstrous Ingratitude !

XVI.

‘ O Beauty Eternal and infinite ! If I were to live  
‘ eternally here on Earth, I were bound Eternally  
‘ to love thee ! How much more then, during my  
‘ short stay here on Earth ! O my Lord, consecrate  
‘ my Life to thy Love ! Let every Day and Hour  
‘ of my Life be employ’d in thy Love ; and make  
‘ me ambitious of nothing more, than to love thee  
‘ to all Eternity.

XVII.

‘ O thou Everlasting King ! At the Price of thy  
‘ precious Blood thou hast bought every Moment  
‘ of my Time, that I might employ it in loving  
‘ thee ! How much of that Time have I employ’d  
‘ in loving the World, and the Creatures ! How  
‘ much of that Time have I lost in loving things I  
‘ should not love ! ’Tis time that I begin to employ  
‘ my Hours about that, for which they were de-  
‘ sign’d : And since they were given me to love thee,  
‘ Oh, transform all my Desires into Aspirations and  
‘ Breathings after thee !

XVIII.

‘ O my *Jesus* ! Thou art so perfect, and so love-  
‘ ly, that if all Creatures in Heaven and in Earth,

‘ should joyn their Forces together to love thee,  
 ‘ they could not love thee sufficiently ; and if I had  
 ‘ a thousand hearts, they would all be little enough  
 ‘ to sacrifice to thy Love. O then, how am I  
 ‘ obliged to employ that little strength I have to  
 ‘ love thee ! Oh, that all Mankind might love thee !  
 ‘ Oh, fill them all with a sense of thy Love ! Draw  
 ‘ them, attract them, unite their Hearts, that they  
 ‘ may love thy Name.

## XIX.

‘ O God of my Life ! Thou hast been always em-  
 ‘ ploy’d in loving me ! Thou didst create Heaven  
 ‘ and Earth, to testifie thy Love to me ! All that  
 ‘ thou ever didst in this World for me, was, to shew  
 ‘ how thou lovest me. All the Spiritual and Tem-  
 ‘ poral Blessings thou hast sent upon me, tell me  
 ‘ that thou lovest me. But what greater Testimony  
 ‘ of thy Love can there be, than thy Dying for me !  
 ‘ As thy Love is perpetually exercised towards me,  
 ‘ so let mine be continually exercised towards thee :  
 ‘ And let me glory and rejoyce in nothing so much  
 ‘ as in this, that *I love thee.*

## XX.

‘ O my bountiful Saviour ! O my loving Redee-  
 ‘ mer ! When, when shall it be, that I shall love  
 ‘ thee perfectly ? Here on Earth, I must not hope  
 ‘ for this Happiness ; but in Heaven I shall. O  
 ‘ Heaven, Heaven ! How desirable art thou ! Where  
 ‘ the Love of Jesus shall eternally reign in my Soul !  
 ‘ Where my Love shall be perfectly Pure, perfectly  
 ‘ Seraphick, perfectly Extatical ; and eternal Ages  
 ‘ shall not alter it. At present I am in Prison, en-  
 ‘ compassed with a mortal Body, and must sojourn  
 ‘ in a wicked World. Oh, when will that Day,  
 ‘ that Hour, that Minute, that happy time come,  
 ‘ that I shall be deliver’d from this Dungeon, and  
 ‘ translated to that place, where Love is all in all,  
 ‘ where Love knows no End, no Decay, no  
 ‘ Period ;

‘ Period, where it is pure without a Mixture, in-  
‘ variable without Changes, eternal without cea-  
‘ sing. Come, Lord Jesu! Come quickly!

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*Particular Acts of Devotion at the Acts of Con-  
secration, and receiving of the Consecrated  
Bread and Wine.*

*At the Minister's pouring out the Holy Wine into the Cup.*

‘ **O** Jesu! Who can think of the flowing of thy  
‘ Blood without being desirous to be wash'd  
‘ with it! Or,  
‘ I fancy, I do at this present stand under thy  
‘ Cross, and see thee bleeding for my Sins! Or,  
‘ Oh, let thy Blood flow upon my wounded Soul,  
‘ that I may become a sound Member of thy My-  
‘ stical Body!

*At the Minister's laying his Hand on the Bread.*

‘ O Blessed Saviour! Lay thy Hand upon my Soul,  
‘ that all my Distempers may depart from me! Or,  
‘ Oh, lay hold on my Soul, as the Angel did on  
‘ Lot! Save me from the Flames, and let me escape  
‘ into the Mount of God, that I perish not!

*At the Minister's breaking the Bread.*

‘ O Lord Jesu! In suffering thy Body to be bro-  
‘ ken for my Sins, I see the Vehemence, the  
‘ Strength, and Fervour of thy Love: Oh, make  
‘ me all Love, all Fervour, all Charity! Or,  
‘ Oh, break the united Forces of my Sins; scat-  
‘ ter them by thy mighty Arm. Gather the broken  
‘ Planks of Virtue in my Soul; unite them, make  
‘ them



‘ them whole, and strong, and secure against the  
 ‘ Fury of Winds and Tempests.

*At the Minister’s pronouncing the Words,*  
 This is my Body.

‘ Lord! Let me look off from these material  
 ‘ Things; and shew me Things Invisible and Hea-  
 ‘ venly! Or,

‘ O Lord! The Benefits of thy wounded Body, my  
 ‘ Soul longs for. Oh, say, they shall be thy Portion!

*At the Minister’s touching the Cup.*

‘ Lord! Touch my Soul, that it may feel the  
 ‘ Power of thy super-abundant Charity! Or,

‘ Oh! Touch me, as thou didst the Blind of old,  
 ‘ that I may see the Bowels of thy Compassion,  
 ‘ and rejoyce in the glorious Sight!

*At the Minister’s pronouncing the Words,*  
 This is my Blood.

‘ Lord! My Soul wants Wine of another Nature,  
 ‘ than is in this Cup: Oh, wash it and cleanse it,  
 ‘ and purify it in thy Blood! Or,

‘ Lord! Speak thou to my Soul, and say, *I will,*  
 ‘ *be thou clean!*

*At the Receiving of the Bread.*

‘ Lord! Let thy Death be my Life! And the  
 ‘ Bread represented by this Bread, send me into  
 ‘ Everlasting Life! Or,

‘ Lord! As thou hast provided Food for my Soul,  
 ‘ so give me a Taste and Relish also of this Food,  
 ‘ and a Tongue to praise thy Name for ever. Or,

‘ Lord!

‘ Lord! As thou hast given thy Body for me, so  
‘ I freely offer my Soul and Body, as Living Sacri-  
‘ fices, to thy Majesty!

*At the Receiving of the Cup.*

‘ Lord! Nothing is more precious than thy  
‘ Blood! Oh! Let it warm my Heart, that it may  
‘ comply with thy Will, without wavering! Or,  
‘ Lord! Bid me look upon thy Blood; and in thy  
‘ Blood, upon the Reconciliation wrought by it,  
‘ to the Comfort and Edification of my Soul! Or,  
‘ O Lord! I am heavy laden, and my Pollutions  
‘ are great! And as thy Blood alone can remove that  
‘ Burthen, so free me from those Spots and Wrinkles  
‘ which make me look deformed in thy sight!





## CHAP. XXVIII.

Of the proper Acts of Devotion, after we have Received.

### The CONTENTS.

*The Time that is left after our Personal Receiving, before all have communicated, is not to be spent in Gazing or Looking about. Acts of Devotion to be used after Receiving, and relating to the Wisdom, Mercy, Liberality, Love, Goodness, Greatness, and Majesty of God, to our own Vileness and Unworthiness, &c.*

**I**T falls out so often, that when we have communicated, and our Souls have been fed at this Table, a considerable space of Time remains, before the united Praises and Thanksgivings of the Congregation begin again. This Time, be it more or less, must not be spent in looking about, or in sitting still, or in thinking of what Objects our Fancy is pleased to offer and present to us; but in Holy Aspirations. And that the Communicant may know how to employ himself in that Interval, it may not be amiss to set down some pious and proper Ejaculations, whereby he may exercise his Mind according as Time will permit,

I,

‘ O God! Thy Love in *Christ Jesus* deserves to be  
‘ praised, admired, and magnified! There is all that  
‘ in it, which can engage a Soul to break forth in-



‘ to Praises, and Hallelujahs! There is Beauty,  
‘ Wisdom, Condescension, Mercy, Liberality,  
‘ Sweetness, Power, Greatness, Majesty in it, and  
‘ all these in the highest Degree; which would  
‘ force even a dumb Man to speak of thy Glory!

II.

‘ I adore thee, O Holy, Blessed, and Glorious  
‘ Trinity, for that infinite Care of my immortal  
‘ Soul, which I see in all thy Proceedings, and  
‘ Transactions; and particularly, in the Cross of  
‘ my dearest Redeemer! Here thou seemest to em-  
‘ pty all thy Stores, and pourest out thy Graces a-  
‘ bundantly upon the Heads and Hearts of thy Ser-  
‘ vants. Behold! Bless ye the Lord, all ye Servants  
‘ of the Lord, which by Night stand in the House  
‘ of the Lord! Lift up your Hands in the Sanctua-  
‘ ry, and bless the Lord. The Lord hath made  
‘ Heaven and Earth, hath blessed us out of Zion!

III.

‘ O Charming Son of God! I alone am not able  
‘ sufficiently to praise thee; and therefore I wish that  
‘ every Drop of the Ocean, every Grain of Sand,  
‘ every Leaf of the Trees of the Field, and every  
‘ Sprig of Herbs, and all the Creatures that ever  
‘ were, or are, or shall be, might be turn’d into Se-  
‘raphick Tongues, to praise thee!

IV.

‘ O *Jesu*! When I behold thy wonderful Love,  
‘ how it hath bowed, how it hath stooped to so  
‘ mean a Creature as I am, the Thoughts of it force  
‘ my Soul into the humblest and deepest Prostra-  
‘ tions. Thou art Beauty, I am Deformity; Thou  
‘ art Wisdom, I am Ignorance; Thou art Light, I  
‘ am Darkness; Thou art Omnipotence, I am fee-  
‘ ble; Thou art Purity, I am Filth and Dung;  
‘ Thou art Rich, I am Poverty it self; Thou art  
‘ Happy, I am Misery it self; Thou art Perfection,

' I am Weakness; Thou art All in All, I am nothing!

## V.

' O Blessed Saviour! When I see how Men fall  
' in Love with a mortal and fading Beauty, which  
' to Day shines bright as the Sun, to Morrow, by  
' Sickness or Death, is all tarnish'd and decay'd, how  
' do I blame my self, that I do not love thee better,  
' whose Beauty, like thy Crown, is immarcessible;  
' Ages cannot change it, neither Heat nor Cold  
' can alter it. Thou art beautiful in thy Body,  
' beautiful in thy Soul, but infinitely beautiful in  
' thy Divinity. Nothing deserves to be loved, or  
' praised, if thou dost not.

## VI.

' Oh, how blind are poor Mortals, who are so  
' very fond of Honours, Riches, curious Palaces,  
' Gardens, Pleasures, Musick, Rarities, Colours,  
' Herbs, Flowers, Stones and Minerals! Great Con-  
' queror of my Soul! Thou art more honourable,  
' more amiable, more sweet, more pleasant, more  
' agreeable, more delicious, more harmonious to  
' my Soul than all these! Thy Excellency cannot,  
' by searching, be found out!

## VII.

' O Lamb of God! With the Four and Twenty  
' Elders, I fall down before thy Throne, and cry  
' *Blessing, and Praise, and Honour, and Wisdom be unto*  
' *the Lamb for ever and ever; for thou wast slain, and*  
' *hast redeemed us to God, by thy Blood, out of every Kin-*  
' *dred, and Tongue, and People and Nation!*

## VIII.

' O God of Glory! I beseech thee remove from  
' me all those things which would hinder me from  
' glorifying thee! remove from me an unsteady  
' mind, that I may glorify thee in Poverty, as well  
' as in Plenty; in Adversity, as well as Prosperity;  
' in Desertions, as well as in Consolations; in Dis-  
' grace,

‘ grace, as well as in Honour. Let me look upon  
‘ both Conditions, as coming from the same good  
‘ Hand of Providence; and let that be an everla-  
‘ sting Motive to me to shew forth thy Glory.

IX.

‘ O God and Father of our Lord *Jesus Christ*! I  
‘ desire to glorify thee in this World, and in that to  
‘ come, with Men here, and with Angels hereafter.  
‘ Give me the Grace of Continuance in magnifying  
‘ thy Name, thy Goodness, and thy Charity, while  
‘ I am in this barren Wilderness, that I may not fail  
‘ of being admitted to the Regions of the Blessed,  
‘ where I may praise and magnify thee, World  
‘ without end.

X.

‘ O *Jesu*! Why art thou so lovely, so beautiful,  
‘ so amiable, but that I might love thee! But I can-  
‘ not love thee of my self. Thy Love must give  
‘ me Power, and sow the Seeds of Reciprocal Love  
‘ in my Soul. O Love! O Desire of my Soul! Oh,  
‘ do not do that Injury to thy infinite Perfections,  
‘ as to let me live without being passionately ena-  
‘ moured with thee!

XI.

‘ O God, who hast promised that the Needy shall  
‘ not always be forgotten; that the expectation of  
‘ the Poor shall not perish for ever! Look upon me  
‘ a poor, needy Wretch, and give me those Riches  
‘ I desire, and without which, I must ever count  
‘ my self most miserably poor, even the Riches of  
‘ thy Love; which whoever does enjoy, hath  
‘ enough, and more than the richest Prince can  
‘ pretend to.

XII.

‘ Who would not praise thee, O thou great Re-  
‘ deemer of Men! Seven times a day will I praise  
‘ thee, because of thine infinite Charity. Morning and  
‘ Evening



Evening, and at Noon will I praise thee, because  
 thou hast bought me with Blood. Oh, that Men  
 would praise the Lord for his Goodness, and for  
 his wonderful Works to the Children of Men.  
 The Lord liveth, and blessed be my Rock, and  
 let the God of my Salvation be exalted. He de-  
 livers me from my Enemies; yea, thou liftest me  
 up above those that rise up against me: Therefore  
 will I give Thanks unto thee, O Lord, and sing  
 Praises unto thy Name for ever.





## CHAP. XXIX.

Of the Life we are to lead after we have receiv'd the Holy Communion.

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### The CONTENTS.

*The Life to be led after Receiving, a Reasonable Service. Wherein that Service consists. The necessity of it. Men that are in an unconverted State, live below their Reason. The Generality of Men very rational in Temporal Concerns, but very unreasonable in Things belonging to their Everlasting Peace. The Prayer.*

I. **T**Hough from the Premises any Man may guess, what Life it is, that a Christian, who hath engaged himself to God in this Sacrament, and vow'd Faith and Allegiance to the King of Saints, is to live after it; yet to make these Instructions compleat, I shall briefly add some *Memorandums* that are to be observed in our future Conversation; and though in the foregoing Discourse I have often occasionally mention'd such a thing, as a **REASONABLE SERVICE**; yet it's time I should now press it with great earnestness, there being nothing more proper, nothing more equitable, after such solemn Engagements, than this Service; and if we examine what it is, it will be found to consist in these following Particulars.

1. In an happy agreement of our Profession and Actions; of our Belief and Practises of our Principles and Conversation; where our Profession is of one colour, and our Practice of another; where our Tongues speak one thing, and our Lives another, there I need not tell you how we involve our selves in a palpable contradiction. Things contradictory mutually destroy each other. A thing that is cold, cannot at the same time be hot; and what is black at the same time, and under the same respects, cannot be white; and consequently, where the Actions contradict our Principles, the Actions destroy our Principles, and in God's account, we deny the Principles too by denying the Consequences, which are the Actions that should naturally issue from those Principles and he that hath very good Principles, but allows himself in bad Actions, cannot be partly good, and partly bad, but is wholly bad, which makes the Holy Ghost call all those *Unbelievers*, which profess the true Worship of God, and dishonour it by their Lives, *Heb. 3. 17, 18, 19.* But where I do believe, that God is my Supreme Governor, and therefore prefer his Will and Favour before the Will and Favour of Men, when these two interfere, and are contrary to one another; where I do believe, that neither Fornicators, nor Adulterers, nor Effeminate, nor Thieves, nor Covetous, nor Drunkards, nor Revilers, nor Extortioners, shall inherit the Kingdom of God, and therefore will not be persuaded, by all the gain, and profit of the World, to venture upon any of these Sins; If I believe, that my Soul is worth more than a whole World, and therefore will not wrong my better Part, though I might have the Riches of the *Indies* for doing it; If I believe, that I am ashamed of the Gospel of *Christ*, and of observing his Laws, the Son of God will certainly be ashamed of me in the last day; and thereupon take courage to act like a Man that



that believes it, and stand up for the Glory and Honour of my God, with Humility and Modesty, in despite of all the Reproaches, and contempt of the World. If I profess and believe, that if I love not the Lord *Jesus Christ*, so as to testify my Love in my obedience to him, I shall be for ever Banish'd from the glorious Presence of God, and thereupon express my Love in thinking of him, in honouring and esteeming Him within and without; If I believe, that except my Righteousness exceeds the Righteousness of the *Scribes and Pharisees*, I shall in no wise enter into the Kingdom of Heaven, and thereupon actually shun those Sins, which the Pharisees made nothing of; there my Belief and Actions go hand in hand together, and if I hate to profess one thing and to do another, then my Service is truly reasonable, and I have not receiv'd the Sacrament in vain.

2. *In subjecting our Flesh and Bodies to our Reason.* This is to make our Members or Bodies Instruments of Righteousness, as it is said, *Rom. 6. 13.* And what can be more reasonable, than that the Slave should be subject to his Lord, the Servant to his Master, the base and ignoble Part to the more excellent, the Flesh to the Spirit, and the Law of the Members to the Law of the Mind? *I have seen faith Solomon, Servants upon Horses, and Princes walk as Servants upon the Earth, Eccl. 10. 7.* The Moral of it is, that it is unnatural, unreasonable, horridly monstrous, to make our Reason a Slave to our Interest, and to suffer the Brute to ride the Man; when Reason is only made use of to cater and provide for the ease and satisfaction of the Flesh, it is as dismal a sight, as to see a King brought to the Block, and an excellent Prince murder'd by his Subjects. And therefore, where Reason enlighten'd by the Day-spring from on high, and by the Lanthorn of the Word of God, points at the Will of God, and

the Eye will not look upon Vanity, and dangerous Shows, and lustful Objects, because Reason saith, that gazing upon them is unlawful ; and the Ears will not hearken to corrupt Communications, nor to filthy Jest and Talk, because Reason says, that this becomes not the gravity of Saints ; and the Tongue will not speak any thing, but what may edifie and administer Grace unto the Hearer, because Reason says, that this is the Law of the *Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus* ; and the Hands will touch nothing that may raise unclean Thoughts or disorderly Desires, because Reason says, that this is to shun the occasions of Evil ; and the Body will eat and drink moderately, and will not pamper it self, because Reason says, that Moderation is the Christians Motto, and the want of it grieves the Spirit of God ; there the Service is reasonable, and an Argument, that we have not received the Sacrament in vain.

3. *In worshipping God with the understanding and inward Man.* If a Man talks with his Neighbour, his Understanding ordinarily is fixt upon the Subject he discourses of ; and what is Praying and Praising, but speaking to God ? And surely, no rational Creature will think, that God deserves less attention than Man. If with my Lips I pray, and my Mind is at *Rome*, or *Constantinople* ; if my Mouth sings, and my Thoughts are in my Shop ; if I read or hear the Word of God, and my Thoughts are upon my Trade, or worldly Business, it is a brutish, not reasonable Service. This the very Heathens have taken notice of, as were an easie thing to prove, *Cato*, *Epictetus*, *Plato* and *Antoninus*, if there were occasion. The Understanding must bear a principal part in the Devotion ; and I must not only understand the thing I pray for, but my Understanding and Thoughts must keep pace with my Prayer, and fix upon the tremendous Majesty I address to ; and though there are very few Men so happy, as to fix  
their

their Understanding upon a Spiritual Object in Devotion, without the least variation, or wandering of the Thoughts; yet he that means to offer God his reasonable Service, must hold his Understanding to it, as much as lies in him; and, if at any time it declines from that point, reduce it, and bring it back again to the Center, from which it hath swerv'd; and though the Service be thereby somewhat interrupted, yet, as long as the Interruption is not wilful, God will still accept of it, as of a reasonable Service.

II. Nor need we wonder, why this should be necessary; For,

1. The Service must ever resemble God, to whom it is offer'd; and God being the highest Reason, and the Fountain of it, the Service must be answerable. To worship the most reasonable Being, with unreasonable Offerings, is a thing so absurd, that the very sound of it is enough to fright us from it. To worship God with our Bodies, while our Souls do adore and admire something else, is to make God a sensual Being, and therefore our Saviour from the notion of *God's being a Spirit*, enforces the Duty of *Worshipping him in Spirit and in Truth*, John 4. 24.

2. It is necessary for our own sakes. If it be not reasonable, we can take no comfort in it, and besides, cannot avoid running into Hypocrisie. Hypocrisie is to seem to be good; and not to be so, as a false Pearl seems to be Oriental, but is not. It's this reasonable Service, which must give our Devotion its just weight and goodness; where this is wanting, a Man seems to please God, but doth not, and from hence must necessarily arise great delusions and deceptions; and the Soul that hath long flatter'd her self with external Services, when before the great Tribunal it shall find, how wofully and



wilfully it has mistaken the nature and design of the Gospel, must fall into everlasting Grief and Torment.

*The Preceding Considerations reduc'd to farther Practice.*

I. **T**O be in an unconverted Estate, and to live below ones Reason, are one and the same thing: Look upon a poor sensual Wretch, that is yet a Stranger to the Life of God; He rejoices in those Sins which will make him infallibly miserable; He stands upon the brink of Destruction, and laughs; God is angry with him, and he is pleased with it. He prefers a Stone before Bread, a Serpent before a Fish. He glories in his Shame, triumphs in his Fetters, breaks the Laws of the great Thunderer, and justifies his Actions, and what is this but Madness and Distraction? And, O Sinner! Is this a condition to sleep another Night in? Is this a State to continue in one Moment longer? Awake, awake thou Sluggard, lest the Revenger of Blood overtake thee?

II. What pity is it to see Men so rational in their Temporal Concerns, and so unreasonable in the things which belong to their everlasting Peace! They would not make a false Step, nor do an imprudent Action, in the management of their Estates and Fortunes, yet manage the greatest concerns of their Salvation so sillily, so foolishly, so irrationally, that one would think, they were intended for no higher Life, than that of Bees and Butterflies. O Christians! Is there such a thing as a Life to come, and an immortal Life, purchased by the Blood of the Son of God, and is it not reasonable to look after it, with the greatest application of your Minds and Understandings? What will all your Wisdom in getting provision for the Flesh, profit you, while  
you

you are Fools in the things of God, of Heaven and Eternity! O Sirs! Think of this reasonable Service, without which, it had been better that you had never been born!

*The P R A Y E R.*

**O** God, Great and Glorious, I have too long measur'd thy Service by mine own ease, more than by thy Will and Precepts. Give me Understanding, that I may do that which is most agreeable to thy holy Nature, and the Interest of my immortal Soul. O let thy Grace awaken my Reason, that I may exercise my self for the future, more in things Spiritual, and Invisible! Thy Gospel is so true, the Miracles recorded there so convincing, the Doctrine so weighty, the beauty of Holiness so charming, thy Promises so gracious, thy Threatnings so terrible, thy Laws so equitable, that I wonder at my backwardness to offer unto thee my reasonable Service. Thou art my Father, how reasonable is it that I should love thee! Thou art my Master, how reasonable is it that I should obey thee! Thy Rewards are infinite, how reasonable is it, that I should contend earnestly to get them! Lord, thou knowest my weakness, and the Stubborness of my Heart. O adjure me by the Mercies of God to present unto thee my Soul and Body, as a living Sacrifice, that whether I live, or die, I may live and die in the Lord Jesus. *Amen.*



## CHAP. XXX.

### Of the Ceremony or Posture of Kneeling at the Holy Sacrament.

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#### The CONTENTS.

*Want of Charity the great Cause of Man's separating from a Church; found in her Doctrines and Morals, in point of Ceremonies. Essential Things, in the first Institution of this Sacrament, must be separated from Circumstantial. The Posture Christ used, was not Sitting, but Leaning, or Lying on one Side. No Churches ever used that Posture. Several Reasons why Kneeling is the most proper Posture in Receiving. The Prayer.*

*Euseb. Eccles. Hist.  
lib. 5. cap. 23.*

I. **I**T is observed by *Eusebius*, that when *Polycarp*, the famous Bishop of *Smyrna*, came to *Rome*, tho' he differed from *Anicetus*, the Bishop of that See, in Points of Ceremony, and Customs, he had received from *St. John*, yet they communicated together; and did not think it Christian-like, to break Communion for any difference in Things of that Nature. An excellent Temper! And which I could wish had been observed by our Dissenting Brethren, who have been over scrupulous about the Posture of Kneeling at the Holy Sacrament. 'Tis a lamentable thing, to see how Men divide, and separate one from another in Religion, upon the Account of



of little External Formalities; and neglect the Substance for a Circumstance; and the great Duty of Charity, because the Ornaments and Decencies of a Church are not modell'd according to their Humour. What Account can such Men give of themselves to God, who leave a Church, by their own Confessions, sound in Doctrines and Morals, for a few External Things, which are not agreeable to their Fancy? Is this a Cause worth suffering for? And can they imagine, that God will reward them for neglecting a greater Duty for a less? Into what Passion and Bitterness have some been transported, that they have even eventured to call this Kneeling at the Communion, *Idolatry* and *Superstition*! When the Children of *Reuben*, *Josh.* 22. 27. protested, that the Altar they had erected, was not for Sacrifice, or Burnt-Offering, but only as a Witness that they were part of the Tribes of *Israel*, the whole Congregation of the Children of *Israel* acquiesced, and were satisfied. Our Church protests publickly against any intent of paying Adoration, by this Ceremony, to the Consecrated Elements, which would make it *Idolatry*; and yet so dis-ingenuous are some, that notwithstanding this Protestation, they fill both their own, and other People's Heads with Fears, that Popery and *Idolatry* may be hid under that fair outside. In which Proceedings there is so little Charity and Ingenuity, that it is a shame Men should pretend to Conscience, and shew so little of it in their Censures.

II. That which hath betrayed too many into these uncharitable Verdicts, hath been their not distinguishing betwixt the Essentials and Circumstantial of this Sacrament; betwixt things barely related, and commanded: And while they have thought themselves obliged to keep exactly to every occasional Action, or Gesture, used by Christ, but not

commanded in this Sacrament, they have led themselves and others into very palpable Mistakes and Delusions. And yet, when all is done, even these Persons that plead against Kneeling at this Sacrament, under a Pretence of keeping close to the Letter of Christ's Actions, do at the same time neglect several Circumstances, observed in the first Institution; for it was Celebrated in an Upper-Room, administered only to Twelve, to Men, and not to Women, and at Night, &c. None of which Circumstances are observed by these Men. And if one Circumstance may be neglected, why may not another, such as Sitting, be forborn? That Christ and his Disciples sat at this Sacrament, is the common Allegation; and we render the Greek Words, Ἀνέπεσεν, and Ἀνέκλιτο, by *He sat down*: And the reason why we render it so, is, because Sitting comes nearer to the Posture Christ used than Standing or Kneeling. But any Man that is no Stranger, either to Greek, or to the Custom of the Jews, must needs know, that these Words do properly import *Leaning*, or *Inclining*, or *Lying on one Side*: And this the Jews express by their הסיבה, as *Sitting* by ושיבה. making a great difference betwixt these two. This *Leaning*, or *Lying*, the Jews used at their Passover: Whether they borrowed this Rite, or Posture, from the Grecians, Romans, and Persians, who used to Sup in that Posture, I will not determine. But the manner, was this; they lean'd, or lay on their Left Side, upon little Beds, made for that purpose, called in their Language, מיטות *Mittoth*; by the Greeks κλιναι; and each Bed held Three Persons. The Law had commanded Standing at the Eating of the Passover; but the Church looked upon that Posture, as Servile, accommodated only to those Times, when they were in Egypt; and therefore changed it into the Posture of Leaning, which they thought

thought as a Badge of Liberty: Nor doth *Christ* find fault with their Church, for making this Alteration in a commanded Posture; for himself practised it; knowing that Circumstantial Things are left to the Discretion of the Governors of Churches, to keep or abolish them, as they shall see convenient. And this was so universally believed by all Churches of the Christian World, that none I could ever hear or read of, hath kept to the Posture of Leaning, or Lying on one Side, in the Use of this Holy Sacrament; which they would not have presumed to do, if this Posture had been Essential to the Receiving of the Sacrament. And whereas it is commonly said, that this was a Table-posture, to which Sitting succeeded; still this shews, that Men have varied from the Posture *Christ* used: And since he hath commanded no Posture, all Churches are at their liberty to order what Posture they think fit; and he is a contentious Man that opposes it. What Posture the Primitive Church used at the Receiving of the Sacrament, Antiquity hath not left upon Record: That they stood at their Publick Prayers on *Sundays*, and on other Days too, from *Easter* to *Whitsontide*, we know; but whether they observ'd the same Posture at the Sacrament, is uncertain; tho' if they used Standing, still it was their Posture of Worship and Adoration. *St. Chrysostom*, indeed, tells us, that the Priests in his Time stood at the Altar, waiting for Communicants; but how they received the Symbols, he doth not mention. *Dionysius* of *Alexandria*, speaking of a Person unlawfully baptized, tells us, that he stood at the Table of the Lord when he was to Receive: But *Ruffinus* interprets that, of the Act, not Gesture of Receiving; it being common among the Ancients, to express their publick Worship, by Standing, or Stations. 'Tis like, that when the Apostle had reprov'd the *Corinthians*, for not distinguishing the Lord's Table from



from their common Suppers, in point of reverence and seriousness, the Christians bethought themselves of a more humble and suitable Posture, than they used at their common Meals. There is no Man, I hope, so wicked, as to exclude Prayers and Praises at the Receiving of the Holy Symbols: And what can be a more proper Posture for these Devotions, than Kneeling? Kneeling hath in all Ages been accounted the proper Posture of Prayers and Praises: And who can think of the Love of God, represented to us in this Sacrament, without them? And if these be proper and necessary here, why should the humble Posture, in which they are offered, be counted Superstitious? The Heathens themselves have condemn'd Irreverence in the External Performance of God's Service: And shall Pagans and Infidels out-do us in Humility of Worship? Whenever Sacrifices were offer'd heretofore, the Officer bowed himself to his God. And shall we offer the Sacrifice of Prayer and Thanksgiving to our crucified Redeemer, in this Sacrament, without bowing? We come before God in this Sacrament, as Beggars, as Sinners, as indigent Worms: And what can be more suitable to Persons under those Circumstances, than the humblest Postures? Here we come to receive a Pardon from the Great King of Heaven: And doth a Man receive a Pardon of a Temporal King upon his Knees, and shall he refuse to receive a Pardon of far greater consequence, and of a greater Prince too, in that Posture? We believe that at such Times we receive Christ into our Souls: And shall our External Humility be less than the Centurion's, who did not think himself worthy that Christ should come under his Roof? Or, if we have the same Apprehensions of our own Unworthiness; shall not we express them by proper External Postures? Where the Soul hath a great sense of the Love and gracious Presence of God,

it will even force the Body into humble Postures: And it is to be fear'd, where People are loth to Kneel, they are Strangers to this Sense in the Holy Sacrament. What is urg'd, that Pope *Honorius* in the Thirteenth Century did first bring in Kneeling at the Sacrament, is evidently false; for, all that he order'd, was, that the Body should be decently bowed, when the Holy Symbols were lifted up by the Priest; which is nothing to our Kneeling at the Sacrament. The Primitive Church, tho' they do not mention Kneeling at the Sacrament, yet they exhort their Hearers to Grief and Sorrow, and Confessions, and an humble Sense of Sin, in the Act of Receiving; and we may rationally infer, that they did not do this without Kneeling, or Prostration. And since the Ancient Writers make frequent mention of the Word *Adoration* in receiving, we cannot but conclude, that they used a Posture proper, and expressive of that Adoration. And why should we scruple to express our Adoration of God, by Kneeling in this Sacrament, when we see the Church Triumphant in Heaven, at their singing the Praises of the Lamb that was slain, fall down before the Lamb, and say, *Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive Power, and Riches, and Wisdom, and Strength, and Honour, and Glory, and Blessing*; as St. *John* informs us, *Rev.* 5. 8, 12.

The P R A Y E R.

O Thou Eternal Wisdom of the Father! Who being in the Form of God, thoughtest it no Robbery to be equal with God, but madest thy self of no Reputation, and tookest upon thee the form of a Servant, and wast made in the Likeness of Men; and being found in fashion

fashion as a Man, didst humble thy self, and becamest obedient unto Death, even the Death of the Cross: Wherefore, God also hath highly exalted thee, and given thee a Name, which is above every Name; that at the Name of *Jesus* every Knee should bow, of things in Heaven, and things in Earth, and things under the Earth, and that every Tongue should confess that *Jesus Christ* is Lord, to the Glory of God the Father. O Lord of Glory, Over-awe both my Outward and Inward Man, with a sense of thy astonishing Mercies, that both may bow, and both may express their Gratitude. Let my Body as well as Soul, worship thee, love thee, admire thee, and humble themselves before thee, who art the Image of the Invisible God, the First-born of every Creature; for by thee were all things created that are in Heaven, and that are in Earth; visible and invisible; whether they be Thrones, or Dominions, or Principalities, or Powers; all things were created by thee, and for thee. To thee be Glory for ever and ever. *Amen.*



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